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The doings of social entrepreneuring:

Processes and practices of social venturing with public collaboration

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ABSTRACT

Collaboration plays a vital role in social venturing in terms of resourcing, social venture development and increased social impact. Hence, what do social entrepreneurs *do* when they enact collaboration?

Taking social venture-public collaboration as an empirical context, the thesis draws attention to the "doing" of social entrepreneuring by scrutinising the *processes* and *practices* through which social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing social ventures and enabling public services to change. To address this, the study draws on two longitudinal case studies of social ventures in Norway and explores the processes and practices as they unfold and are experienced in real-time. The thesis consists of an extended cover essay ("kappe") and four independent research papers that address a number of issues related to entrepreneurial "doing" for collaboration in ambiguous environments.

The thesis challenges the individualised discourses of entrepreneurship by emphasising the importance of others in social entrepreneuring. As the resourcing and changing of public services is a collective endeavour, the findings underline the collective dimensions of social entrepreneuring. Approaching entrepreneurial "doing" from the practice ontology draws attention to the relational dynamics of entrepreneurial activities and practices, thereby stressing the importance of the mutual interpersonal relationships and surroundings within an entrepreneur's immediate practice. The thesis furthers our understanding of how social entrepreneurs weave new relations into collaboration by engaging in the specific practices and processes. It also extends our understanding of alternative investing by theorising it as brokering. In particular, the thesis points to the important role of social investors in enacting public collaboration, and thereby facilitating social venturing. Lastly, the thesis theorises on the powerful role of emotions as part of the entrepreneurial resourcing repertoire.

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LIST OF PAPERS

The following four papers are included in the PhD thesis:

I. Kosmynin, M. (2021). Social entrepreneurship organisations and collaboration: taking stock and looking forward. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print). https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-02-2021-0144

II. Title: 'Everyday heroes and everyday chores: How social entrepreneurs do resourcing through collaboration'
Authors: Mikhail Kosmynin & Elisabet C. Ljunggren
Status: Under review in *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, a 3rd round of reviews

III. Title: 'Playing around with the "rules of the game": social entrepreneurs navigating the public sector terrain in pursuit of collaboration'
Authors: Mikhail Kosmynin
Status: Accepted for publication in the forthcoming '*Rethinking the Social in Innovation and Entrepreneurship*', Edward Elgar Publishing

IV. Kosmynin, M., & Jack, S. L. (2022). Alternative investing as brokering: The embedding process of a Social Impact Bond model in a local context. *Journal of Business Venturing Insights*, 17, e00297. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbvi.2021.e00297

PART I. OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The role of collaboration in social entrepreneurship and social venturing

'I am not good at challenges [laughing]. My mindset is that I do not see any problems or challenges but I am spotting and going for opportunities. I do not remember, to be honest, if there were any challenges in the collaboration process with Fjord municipality [laughing].'

(Helena, social entrepreneur)

In recent years there has been an increasing interest in the broader social value and social aspects of entrepreneurship (Jack & Anderson, 2002; Kimmitt & Muñoz, 2018; Steyaert & Katz, 2004; Zahra & Wright, 2016). In particular, social entrepreneurship (SE) has advanced significantly and is now an influential area of academic and practical importance (Bacq & Janssen, 2011; Choi & Majumdar, 2014; Mair, 2020; Saebi et al., 2019; Stephan et al., 2016). SE has been recognised as a powerful mechanism to confront poverty and inequality, reduce unemployment, improve health, elderly care and people's well-being, catalyse social transformation, confront climate change and the like (Zhao & Lounsbury, 2016). As such, social entrepreneurs and social ventures increasingly attract scholarly attention. By adopting market-based approaches to resolve societal problems, social ventures where SE manifests itself are seen as vehicles for creating social impact and, ultimately, social change in and for a particular community, affected populations and local governments, as well as offering novel and creative entrepreneurial solutions (Kimmitt & Muñoz, 2018; Saebi et al., 2019; Siebold et al., 2019).

Although SE has witnessed remarkable knowledge developments, recent research has taken a more cautious stance and questioned the idealised conceptions of SE practices (Dey & Lehner, 2017; Chalmers, 2020). Some scholars have claimed that the rhetoric of SE may have outpaced its reality (Berglund & Wigren, 2012; Dey & Steyaert, 2012).

For example, Chalmers (2020, p.1364) argued that SE suffers 'from a solutionism problem in which an entrepreneurship "gloss" is liberally applied to a broad range of complex social problems, many of which could be more effectively addressed through other measures, namely social and economic policy'. SE discourse was found to be in line with neoliberal politics (Fougère et al., 2017). It represents itself as a neoliberal phenomenon, in that it is a ''tactic of neoliberal governmentality'' that turns the social into a space of competition, individual responsibility and self-organisation. Common across SE research are idealised conceptions of what social entrepreneurs do. This is worryingly evident in the heroic stories that appear in the media, in research and in support organisations (Kimmitt & Muñoz, 2018). Indeed, calls have been made to scrutinise social entrepreneurial activities and what social entrepreneurs do in practice more closely (Barinaga, 2017; Dey & Steyaert, 2012; Johannisson, 2018; Kimmitt & Muñoz, 2018; Zahra & Wright, 2016).

A promising yet understudied aspect of SE and social venturing[1] is *collaboration*, which is at the heart of this thesis. As the academic study of SE continues to grow, increasing attention in research and political and business practice has been given to an important role of collaboration in SE and social venturing (de Bruin et al., 2017; European Commission, 2020). This is especially evident in the rise of special issues of leading academic journals addressing the role of collaboration in SE and social venturing (*Entrepreneurship and Regional Development, 2017; Journal of Management Studies, 2017*) and an increasing number of publications on the topic over the last few years. Further, in a recent commentary published in the Journal of Management Studies, Bacq and Lumpkin (2020) stress the need to look beyond organisational conflicts and tensions in the context of social ventures, which have gained considerable academic attention, and instead consider the "bigger picture" that includes collaborations with other organisations addressing societal problems. In this thesis, I assert that

[1] Organising efforts driven by concern *for others* and enabled by working *with others* (Drencheva et al., 2021)

collaboration is a voluntary process of helping other organisational partners to achieve (common) goals or one or more of their private goals (Castañer & Oliveira, 2020).

In challenging the "heroic" stance of social entrepreneurs leading social ventures, the literature has moved to collective and co-produced accounts by arguing that much of SE is collaborative (Chell et al., 2010; de Bruin et al., 2017; Lehner, 2014; Montgomery et al., 2012). Empirical evidence goes further and suggests that many social ventures are collaborative by nature (Mair, 2020) and have a 'collaborative mentality' (Kickul & Lyons, 2020; Tasavori et al., 2018), which results in collaborative, as opposed to competitive, behaviour towards other organisations. Accordingly, collaboration has been acknowledged as a shared feature of social ventures across contexts (Mair, 2020) and as playing a vital role in social venturing: resourcing, social venture development and increased social impact (de Bruin et al., 2017; Di Domenico et al., 2009; Huybrechts & Nicholls, 2013; Pret & Carter, 2017; Renko, 2013; Zahra & Wright, 2016; Weber et al., 2017).

Resourcing social ventures is an important part of the entrepreneurial process. Resources are critical for social ventures to fulfil their social mission and increase social impact while striving to become financially viable (Desa & Basu, 2013; Jayawarna et al., 2020; Pret & Carter, 2017). While most entrepreneurial ventures operate under considerable resourcing constraints, in social ventures these constraints are even more severe due to their social mission (Bacq & Eddleston, 2016; Bojica et al., 2018; Desa & Basu, 2013), which often drives them to forsake healthier margins (Bacq & Eddleston, 2016). In this light, recent research has demonstrated that collaboration is a critical and common social entrepreneurial activity and resourcing practice (de Bruin et al, 2017; McNamara et al., 2018), which is one of the sub-themes of this thesis. Accordingly, social entrepreneurs increasingly rely on collaboration with partners to tackle the resourcing constraints they face. Research has explored collaboration social ventures establish with private businesses (Barraket & Loosemorede, 2018; Huybrechts et al., 2017), corporations (Di Domenico et al., 2009; Huybrechts &

Nicholls, 2013; Savarese et al., 2020), between themselves (Arenas et al., 2020) but to a lesser extent with public sector organisations (Hogenstijn et al*.,* 2018; Vannebo & Grande, 2018).

In reviewing this emerging strand of research, it becomes apparent that collaboration between social ventures and other organisations has its challenges. SE research has emphasised the tensions that social entrepreneurs and their ventures can experience in collaborative settings (Barinaga, 2020; de Bruin et al., 2017; Mitzinneck & Besharov, 2018; Weidner et al., 2016). For example, this line of research has identified the dual objectives of social ventures as sources of tension, which can result in tension ridden relationships and resistance from incumbent actors as supplementary social welfare providers (Hogenstijn et al., 2018; Kibler et al., 2018; Muñoz & Kimmitt, 2019). Social ventures combine values and norms that have traditionally belonged to the private, voluntary or public sector. On the one hand, this combination may imply a potential for innovation, yet may also carry a potential for misunderstandings and tension ridden relationships on the other (Berglund et al., 2012). Further, research has contributed to understanding the challenges faced by social entrepreneurs, such as potential mission drifts, arising from competing partners' institutional logics (Barinaga, 2020; Kwong, 2017).

Although there has been some theoretical and empirical progress in our understanding of collaboration in SE and social venturing, it is not clear from this limited yet growing body of research what social entrepreneurs actually *do* to enact collaboration, how they navigate challenges in a collaborative setting and how collaborations unfold and are experienced in *real-time* (de Bruin et al., 2017; Johannisson, 2018). Although the importance of collaboration to SE and social venturing might seem apparent, the literature has left enduring gaps in our knowledge of the *processes and practices* through which social entrepreneurs enact collaborations (Barinaga, 2017; Heinze et al., 2016; Johannisson, 2018; Kuhn & Marshall, 2019; McNamara et al., 2018; Pret & Carter, 2017; Siebold et al., 2018). While scholars have begun to explore entrepreneurial

processes and practices related to collaboration (Barinaga, 2017; Hydle & Billington, 2020; Pret & Carter, 2017), this work remains in its infancy. Furthermore, as collaboration is a critical social entrepreneurial activity for resourcing, there have been numerous calls to further build theory on how social entrepreneurs resource their social ventures through collaboration. For example, there is a lack of theory on how relationships between social ventures and their partners evolve through the course of the resourcing process and which resourcing practices social entrepreneurs employ to resource their ventures through collaboration (Barinaga, 2017; McNamara et al., 2018).

Additionally, in exploring different facets of collaboration in SE and social venturing, prior studies rely heavily on the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm, resource dependency theory and institutional theory (Barraket et al., 2019; Choi, 2015; Huybrechts et al., 2017; Weidner et al., 2019). Although these lines of research have been helpful in providing valuable insights into the nature, outcomes and challenges of collaboration in social venturing, this stream of research has a number of limitations. These studies rarely observe social venture collaborations as they unfold in real-time and thereby only offer a static and limited view, which is problematic for theorising processes and practices in that the findings become blunt, vague and abstracted from actual entrepreneurial "doing" (Gartner & Teague, 2020). As Chalmers and Shaw (2017) note, entrepreneurship scholars need to strive to 'research close to where things happen' as a 'closer connection with the "real world" would be valuable and will make entrepreneurship research more interesting' (Frank & Landström, 2016, p.67). In other words, better theory and insights into entrepreneurial processes and practices can occur through fieldwork, that is, through observation and experience and over time (Gartner & Teague, 2020). Hence, up to now the entrepreneurship literature has not fully engaged with empirical inquiries into entrepreneurial processes and practices to capture the everyday lived experience of participants and the real-time entrepreneurial "doing" for collaboration.

This dearth of research comes as a surprise considering recent developments in entrepreneurship research, such as a shift from the concept of a heroic individual towards a more collective and collaborative endeavour (de Bruin et al., 2017; Branzei et al., 2018) and a growing recognition that "what entrepreneurs do" is an important aspect of entrepreneurship studies, highlighting the importance of studying entrepreneurial "doing" (Gartner & Teague, 2020). Furthermore, parallel to the momentum gained by connecting the practice ''turn'' in social sciences to entrepreneurship, there have been numerous calls to undertake research through an entrepreneurship as practice lens (EaP). This implies taking the practices of entrepreneuring as they unfold and are experienced in real-time (Champenois et al., 2020; Johannisson, 2018; Thompson et al., 2020; Thompson & Byrne, 2020). Thus, I argue that we need a greater scrutiny of processes and practices through which social entrepreneurs enact collaboration and resource their ventures. Disclosing entrepreneurial processes and practices for collaboration is important because it allows for surfacing micro-level social entrepreneurial activities to enact collaboration. Hence, in this thesis I take leave of the dominant approaches in the literature on collaboration in SE and social venturing and instead offer a fresh perspective by shifting the focus to entrepreneurial processes and practices for collaboration.

1.2 Social venture-public collaboration as an empirical context

In this thesis I am particularly interested in the collaborations that social entrepreneurs enact with the local public sector, particularly municipalities, thereby taking social venture-public collaboration as an empirical context. Despite the growing interest shown by practitioners, scholars and policymakers, entrepreneurship research remains bound to social venture-corporates and social venture-business collaborations without paying much attention to social venture-public collaboration. This is surprising (Hogenstijn et al., 2018; Savarese et al., 2020; Seanor, 2018) considering that recent research has shown that, in some contexts, social entrepreneurs and their social venturing efforts greatly depend on collaboration with public sector organisations to

achieve their ambitions to create social value and “fill the gap” (Mair, 2020; Vannebo & Grande, 2018).

The importance of social venture-public collaboration is widely recognised (European Commission, 2020; Hauge, 2017; Hogenstijn et al., 2018). The growing challenges in welfare states, gaps in the provision of social services caused by the growing neoliberalism of government policies and the complex nature of social problems all contribute to an understanding of the benefits of social venture-public collaboration for tackling societal challenges (de Bruin et al., 2017; Vickers et al., 2017). The increasing focus on social venture-public collaboration is also linked to the need to restructure welfare states to find a better way of public service delivery, since there are certain social needs that the public sector is unable to adequately address or needs that might be addressed by other actors, such as social entrepreneurs (Eimhjellen & Loga, 2016). Furthermore, global crises such as the spread of Covid-19 make SE and social venturing more relevant than ever in that they create a pressing need for multiple organisations, including social ventures and the public sector, to coalesce in order to achieve a greater societal impact (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2020). Thus, social venture-public collaboration has been acknowledged as crucial for providing new and effective solutions and enabling public services to change, since social ventures ‘are less invested in the status quo and unlimited by established organisational routines, culture, and modes of thinking’ (Günzel-Jensen et al., 2020, p.2; Hogenstijn et al., 2018; Quélin et al., 2017).

As a result, diverse forms of collaboration, involving social ventures, have recently flourished in the context of growing health and social care needs and severe resource constraints in the public sector, thereby prompting interest in innovative responses to such challenges (Quélin et al., 2017; Vickers et al., 2017). There has been a growing movement in public management and administration literature as well as strategic management literature to examine new, innovative, collaborative forms for public service delivery (Arena et al., 2016; FitzGerald et al., 2020; Weber et al., 2017). They

include co-creation, Social Impact Bonds (SIBs), Social Bridging finance and many others, which go beyond traditional contract-based forms (e.g. contractual public procurement schemes). But how can these collaborations be understood from the perspective of the (social) entrepreneurship literature? How these innovative collaborative forms apply to social entrepreneurs and social venturing has yet to be examined in the entrepreneurship literature (Muñoz & Kimmitt, 2019; Smeets et al., 2017). Therefore, there have been calls to more explicitly connect (social) entrepreneurship research with collaboration (de Bruin et al., 2017). For example, as Kimmitt and Muñoz (2018) note, although SIBs have proliferated in different contexts, their relationship with entrepreneurship is barely known. Thus, another important aspect and sub-theme of this thesis is to draw attention to the processes through which social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration to enable public services to change.

1.3 Aim and research questions

Against this background, the aim of the thesis is to enhance our understanding of how social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing their social ventures and enabling public services to change. This thesis responds to calls for a more holistic, nuanced and contextual approach to the study of collaboration in SE and social venturing, thereby shifting the focus to entrepreneurial "doing" for public collaboration: processes and practices (Gartner & Teague, 2020). Therefore, my primary research question is:

Through which processes and practices do social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration?

This overall research question is further divided into a number of sub-questions, each of which are addressed in a separate empirical paper:

1) How do social entrepreneurs resource social ventures through public collaboration? What resourcing practices do they employ when responding to a critical incident jeopardising the collaboration?

2) How do social entrepreneurs employ different practices to navigate the complex public welfare setting to bring about public collaboration and facilitate social venturing?
3) What are the embedding processes of a collaborative SIB model in a local context?

By using a mix of qualitative methods, including a systematic literature review and case studies, the study attempts to bridge the gaps by answering independent yet interrelated research questions in four separate papers.

Paper 1 is a systematic literature review (SLR) that takes stock of the current research on collaboration in the context of social entrepreneurship organisations (SEOs) and generates potential research avenues and relevant research questions that are worthy of further investigation. Further, the SLR provides the background and lays the foundation for the other three papers in that it identifies research gaps and provides suggestions for future research on collaboration in the context of SEOs. These suggestions are then developed in the subsequent three empirical papers. Thus, the review serves as a conceptual basis for this thesis as it lays the foundations for studying the processes and practices through which social entrepreneurs enact collaboration. Therefore, paper 2 addresses one of the research gaps identified in the SLR, which is what social entrepreneurs actually do to resource their ventures through collaboration and how they navigate the challenges arising in a collaborative setting. In particular, by adopting an EaP approach as a theoretical lens the study investigates the resourcing practices pursued by a social entrepreneur in the context of a critical incident jeopardising collaboration with municipality. Paper 3 draws on data from two case social ventures to reveal how social entrepreneurs navigate the complex public sector terrain to bring about public collaboration and facilitate social venturing. Lastly, focusing on a specific collaboration model, Social Impact Bond (SIB), paper 4 unpacks the embedding processes of a collaborative SIB model in a local context. Here, the

interest lies in understanding the role of alternative investing and investment instruments such as SIBs in social venturing and enacting public collaboration.

Paper 2 is co-authored with Prof. Elisabet C. Ljunggren and paper 4 with Prof. Sarah L. Jack, while papers 1 and 3 are single-authored. Table 1, below, summarises the four papers in the thesis. I briefly reflect on my research process, particularly, in terms of writing an article-based thesis in the next sub-section.

Table 1. Overview of papers included in the thesis

Paper	Sub-research questions	Contribution towards answering the main RQ	Empirical study	Dissemination
1	(i) What is the state-of-the-art of the research on collaboration in the context of SEOs?; (ii) What are the emerging themes of interest for social entrepreneurship research?; (iii) What are the implications for future research suggested by the findings?	Identifies key research themes to provide an overview of the state of the field. The review reveals that there has been little focus on entrepreneurial processes and practices for collaboration in the context of SEOs; Directs future research on collaboration in the context of SEOs towards more fruitful research avenues, some of the identified gaps are then taken up by the subsequent three empirical papers	a systematic literature review	Previous versions presented at RENT Conference XXXIII, Berlin, Germany, 2019; NORSI Research School Conference, Stavanger, Norway, 2020 and internal seminars at Nord University
2	How do social entrepreneurs resource social ventures through public collaboration? What resourcing practices do they employ when responding to a critical incident jeopardising the collaboration?	Unpacks the black box of resourcing through collaboration by disclosing three categories of resourcing practices; Theorises on the role of emotions in an entrepreneurial resourcing practice and demonstrates that emotions are an important resource to keep the collaboration process alive in a changing and unstable environment	a longitudinal ethnographic case study approach, a single case study	Previous versions presented at the 5th Annual Entrepreneurship as Practice Conference (digital), Amsterdam, 2020 and internal seminars at the Stockholm Business School and Nord University, 2020

3	How do social entrepreneurs employ different practices to navigate the complex public welfare setting to bring about public collaboration and facilitate social venturing?	Provides a better understanding of the lived experiences of social entrepreneurs when engaging with municipalities to enact the context for public collaboration in a Norwegian welfare state	a case study approach, a multiple case study	Previous versions presented at NORSI Research School Conference 2019 and internal seminar at the Stockholm Business School, 2021
4	What are the embedding processes of a collaborative SIB model in a local context?	Unpacks the processes involved in embedding a collaborative SIB model in a local context and reveals the brokerage role of social investor	a longitudinal case study approach, a single case study	To be presented

1.4 Research process: some reflections on writing an article-based thesis

At this point it is appropriate to outline the research process, especially in terms of writing an article-based thesis. In retrospect, my interest in SE and social venturing is the natural outcome of my previous studies and work experience. First, before entering academia I used to work with international projects related to Corporate Social Responsibility and entrepreneurship and, second, my master's thesis was on social innovation, where I collected data from social entrepreneurs in a Russian context. Driven by curiosity and motivated by this phenomenon, I decided to focus on the "doing" of social entrepreneuring and social venturing in the context of a northern European country, Norway, where SE and social ventures are still in a pre-paradigmatic state. However, I also wanted to do research that was relevant and get as close to the studied phenomenon as possible.

Crafting the thesis for three years has not been a straightforward or linear process. Rather, it has been a somewhat fluid and messy process in which I have experienced the multiple and ongoing becomings throughout a doctorate and beyond. Doing this PhD has been valuable not only in terms of the results, but, importantly, also in terms of learning. The submission of the thesis does not signify a distinct endpoint but an ever-evolving learning process. One important aspect of this learning process was the decision to write an article-based thesis in order to learn how to craft papers, move them forward, get to know the "rules of the game" and how to navigate them. A ''publish or perish'' is by now a dogma of the academic world that is undeniable. Further, the process for an article-based thesis is not entirely in our hands: papers are shaped by reviewers and editors who often have their own opinions about how to best present the findings and how to improve a paper. This may result in dissimilarities in the papers during the revision and resubmission processes. In this way, the papers change during the process and can become more heterogeneous than was first intended. Knitting together and presenting these papers with a cover essay is therefore

a task that requires creativity to weave the results together so that the thesis forms a coherent whole.

The four individual papers have taken many productive detours and drafts in my quest to present the most interesting and significant insights for a targeted journal. Besides numerous presentations at conferences and feedback from well-established scholars in the field, all four papers have undergone multiple review and revision rounds. Needless to say, the resulting contributions of the papers stem from collaborative efforts. However, the element of co-creation in the papers goes beyond co-authorship. The four papers constituting this thesis have been co-created with a total of 10 reviewers, not counting the assigned editors who played a crucial role in their development. I have experienced the review processes as very enjoyable and extremely constructive in terms of the reviewers' professionalism, helpfulness and thoroughness along the way. Reviewers' comments are very helpful in terms of suggesting improvements to a manuscript, alternative ways of analysing the data and feedback on the manuscript's contribution to the field.

The original version of paper 1 focused on collaboration in SE. However, during the review process the focus changed from SE to SEOs in order to include a wide range of organisations in which SE activities take place. This required me to conduct a new search across databases by broadening my search strings, and subsequently undertaking a substantial re-write of the paper. Paper 2 has also undergone changes during the review process. Thanks to the developmental comments and suggestions of three reviewers and the editor on how to re-analyse the data, extensive changes were made that required us to re-write most of the paper. In answering to the call for papers for a special issue, crafting and revising qualitative paper 4 was tricky given the journal's word-count limit, but we were allowed to include appendices, which was very helpful and much appreciated.

Looking back at this research project from start, I can say that academic writing is much more than a process of textual production or a means of research communication and

dissemination but a social practice, involving a network of social, institutional and peer relations. I am grateful to my co-authors, colleagues, commentators, reviewers and editors who helped me along the way to actualise the papers' potential.

1.5 Research setting

It is now widely recognised that our understanding of entrepreneurship cannot be separated from the multiple contexts and the social structures in which entrepreneurs are embedded (McKeever et al., 2014; Welter & Baker, 2020). The development and shape of SE are contextually dependent on historical, structural and cultural preconditions (Berglund et al., 2012). The specific contextual conditions in each country shape the field of SE and social ventures (Eimhjellen & Loga, 2016). In other words, context matters (Welter & Baker, 2011). Hence, it is important to situate the entrepreneurial activities in the context in which they take place (Van Burg et al., 2020; Welter & Baker, 2020). In this sub-section I flesh out the context in which social ventures emerge, develop and enact public collaboration, and how they are shaped by powerful agents already engaged in addressing social needs.

For a number of reasons I found the Norwegian welfare state to be an intriguing research setting for exploring the processes and practices through which social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration. Norway represents an especially interesting setting for demonstrating the interplay between context and the forms that SE takes. Historical and current political developments in Norway have had a notable influence on social venture–public relationships. In particular, two prominent contextual features need to be considered: the dominant role of the welfare state in the provision of social services, and recent trends that to some extent blur traditional distinctions between the public, business and voluntary sectors (Hauge & Wasvik, 2016).

The Norwegian (and Scandinavian) societal model has a distinct welfare component and a civil society component, both of which are intertwined (Trætteberg & Fladmoe, 2020). One of the hallmarks of the Norwegian social democratic model is a close

relationship between public authorities and civil society organisations and a high level of citizen participation in voluntary organisations that is measured in terms of membership and volunteers. Historically, this interaction is characterised by close collaboration and integration, implying nearness in terms of communication and contact, financial support and a high degree of autonomy (Loga, 2018).

From the 1940s onwards, the state took a dominant role in providing solutions to social problems - a development that was supported by most voluntary organisations (Lorentzen & Loga, 2016). There was, and continues to be, widespread consensus that state responsibility is the preferred approach for securing citizens' autonomy (Vike, 2018). This also entails a relatively stable set of relationships between the private, public and voluntary sector in the provision of public welfare (Kobro, 2020). Voluntary organisations and for-profit market actors contribute to the provision of public welfare, but only to a limited extent and with few legal responsibilities. Although a strong endeavour to include for-profit and non-profit actors in the delivery of services has been a hallmark of various reforms in Europe (e.g. the UK), this trend had been less marked in the Norwegian context until recently. In Norway, there has been an intense political debate about the privatisation of welfare services. This has focused on public versus private services, with the non-profit sector often being left out.

However, in the last few years several political initiatives have been taken to stimulate the growth of the SE field in Norway. The renewed interest in civil society's potential and discussions about possible changes in the division of welfare production between the sectors have culminated in what is now called ''the welfare mix'' (Trætteberg & Fladmoe, 2020). The very good conditions that have framed the Norwegian welfare model in the last decades are about to change. Changes in the demographics, increased public expenditure, increased expectations on social welfare benefits and emphasis on citizens' rights all put pressure on the Norwegian welfare system. Therefore, while the ongoing debates are linked to questions about economic issues and future sustainability, issues related to diversity in service provision, enhanced user

involvement and involving stakeholders from different sectors in a collaborative approach to welfare production are also increasingly stressed (Loga, 2018). In recent years there has been a growing interest in how civil society and the private sector might contribute to the renewal of welfare states. Thus, the development of SE and the emergence of social ventures should be seen as a part of those debates. The relationship between civil society, the private sector and the welfare state represent an important structural and ideological backdrop for understanding the emergence and development of this field in Norway (Kobro et al., 2017).

Although Norway avoided invasive austerity measures in public services in the aftermath of the financial crisis (2007-2008), the gap between demands for social services and the welfare state's resources to address them is expected to grow in the foreseeable future (Hauge, 2017). As a result, there has been an increasing interest in SE and social ventures. In particular, social ventures are believed to promote new innovative ways of filling the gaps in certain areas, such as work inclusion, elderly care and social exclusion that the welfare state is unable to cover to enable public services to change. It is often in these "pockets" of needs that social entrepreneurs can contribute in collaboration with public authorities (Hauge, 2017; Vannebo & Grande, 2018).

However, the fact that social ventures have social and commercial objectives can lead to confusion – both the research and the practice demonstrate that the public sector finds it challenging to handle the hybridity of social ventures (Eimhjellen & Loga 2016; European Commission, 2019; Gillett et al., 2019; Hauge, 2017). Although scepticism does not necessarily relate to social ventures but to private actors, it significantly affects the development of the field in Norway. In the Norwegian context, if social ventures are juxtaposed with for-profit actors, they run the risk of being perceived as undesirable attempts to privatise welfare services. Furthermore, research has shown that as social entrepreneurs break up normative rules by providing novel and creative solutions, social ventures are likely to be met with resistance (Renko, 2013).

Politically, although social ventures are pinpointed as important innovation resources for the Norwegian welfare system, no specific legal process has yet been initiated to follow up these political signals and no specific legal form is tailored to fit the concept of social venture in Norway (Regjeringen, 2018). Social ventures are spread across many industries and sectors, such as transport, forestry, hospitals, primary schools/education and many areas of social care.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

The structure of this thesis is as follows. The thesis consists of two parts. Part I is the introductory chapter, which provides an overview of the work, while Part II includes the four papers mentioned earlier. Part I begins with an introductory chapter, which presents the overall view of the thesis and outlines the background, motivation, research objective and research questions. The following chapter discusses the theoretical grounding. The research design, the overall research approach, the two cases, the case material and experiences in the field are all described in chapter 3. Chapter 4 briefly outlines the four papers making up this thesis. Finally, chapter 5 discusses the overall findings and contributions across the papers in the light of the previous literature, the implications for policy and practice and suggestions for further research. Part 2 of the thesis presents the four papers in full.

CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVES

In this chapter I introduce and discuss the key concepts and theoretical framework of this PhD study. As discussed in the introductory chapter, this thesis is concerned with *how social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing their social ventures and enabling public services to change*. First, I turn to recent movements in the literature on entrepreneurship regarding the need to reposition entrepreneurship research in order to develop a more nuanced understanding of what entrepreneurs actually do in their local contexts. Second, I present the EaP approach in terms of its theoretical foundations, which is inspired by the practice turn in social sciences. Finally, I discuss (social) entrepreneuring as a theoretical concept. Although these are the main concepts used in this thesis, the empirical papers also draw on insights and ideas from the literature on sociology of emotion (paper 2), social capital and brokerage (paper 4). How these are used is outlined in the papers, but is not elaborated on in this sub-section.

2.1 Entrepreneurship – a suitable case for sociological study

Entrepreneurship is an interesting and extraordinary phenomenon. Research on entrepreneurship has exploded over the past two decades, thus attracting worldwide attention and achieving greater academic legitimacy and approval (Landström & Åström, 2012; Wiklund et al., 2018). As the socially constructed concept of entrepreneurship is open to a variety of interpretations, the meanings that are attributed to it may vary considerably in different social contexts and conditions (Anderson et al., 2009).

Entrepreneurship research is not firmly rooted in any particular discipline. Rather, it draws on a kaleidoscope of disciplines, theories and perspectives (e.g. sociology, economics, psychology, anthropology etc.) (Aldrich, 2010; Landström & Harirchi, 2018; Wiklund et al., 2018). As Jennings et al. (2012, p. 1) suggest, 'in the current era, entrepreneurship is moving outwards to engage with other social science disciplines,

just as these other disciplines are moving inward to engage with entrepreneurship'. As a result, entrepreneurship research is evolving in many different environments and is no longer limited to the business school community (Swedberg, 2000; Wiklund et al., 2018). As Swedberg (2000, p. 7) points out, 'the social sciences have a very important contribution to make, not only to the theoretical understanding of entrepreneurship but also to entrepreneurship as a *practical* enterprise'.

As entrepreneurship is inexorably linked to social processes and organisational forms, (the discipline of) sociology has been and still remains central to the development of the field (Aldrich, 2010; Anderson & Ronteau, 2017; Mair & Martí, 2006; Ruef & Lounsbury, 2007; Watson, 2012, 2013). Entrepreneurship scholars use many sociological concepts and theories, thus leading to a growing sociological presence in entrepreneurship studies (Chalmers & Shaw, 2017; Goss, 2005; Pret & Carter, 2017; Steiner et al., 2021; Swedberg, 2000). There has been a growing literature in the sociology of entrepreneurship and the recognition that entrepreneurship is embedded in its social context (Watson, 2013). Among other things, the sociology of entrepreneurship analyses the social context, processes and effects of entrepreneurial activity. However, this literature has also been criticised for a lack of intellectual cohesion among entrepreneurship sociologists and calls for it to be significantly developed and conceptually 'opened up' have been voiced (Watson, 2012).

Some studies have criticised contemporary entrepreneurship research for its overly individualistic approach (Dodd & Anderson, 2007; Gartner & Teague, 2020), its functionalist tradition and 'a failure to locate entrepreneurial activities sufficiently in their social, cultural and historical context' (Steyaert, 2007; Watson, 2012, p. 307). Entrepreneurship theory in general still adheres to normative individualistic assumptions in the sense that entrepreneurial activities are conceptually equated with the behaviour of one practitioner type – the entrepreneur. This has resulted in investigations into 'the entrepreneur's cognitive antecedents, motivation, contextual conditions and causal relations' (Champenois et al., 2020; Thompson et al. 2020, p.

248). For example, although the personality "traits" view of "entrepreneurs" has provided us with a convincing account of the attitudes of entrepreneurs, it has failed to explain how these traits (re)produce entrepreneurship (Anderson & Ronteau, 2017; Watson, 2012): 'Why search for traits when we have only a limited idea about the substance of entrepreneurial activity?' (Dimov et al., 2021; Ramoglou et al., 2020, p.6).

Watson (2013) argues that as a result of this persistent focus on the entrepreneur, and despite considerable evidence to the contrary (Dodd & Anderson, 2007; Hjorth et al., 2015), too little attention has been paid to the sociological aspects of entrepreneurial activity. The most common interpretations focusing on entrepreneurs' "heroic" personalities are inadequate for a sociological analysis (Vasi, 2009). As such, Watson (2012, 2013) suggests looking at sociology and approaching the concept of entrepreneurship as a particular type of human activity: 'a more appropriate way to proceed in sociological analysis is by studying meaningful social action' (Watson, 2012, p. 308). He encourages a shift of focus from the entrepreneur to the "entrepreneurial action" (or "entrepreneuring") as a key and widely existing feature of 'how things work in the social world' (Watson, 2012, p.308). This goes against a traditional research focus on the entrepreneur and challenges the assumptions of ontological individualism.

Recently, entrepreneurship research has also been criticised for a misalignment between theorising and practice in the sense that research has become disconnected from *practice* (Anderson et al., 2012; Dimov et al., 2020; Wiklund et al., 2018). As Dodd et al. (2021, p. 5) suggest, 'one practical solution is to get closer to practitioners with better theories of entrepreneurship as practice'. In similar vein, Anderson and Ronteau (2017) point out that a theory that is grounded in what entrepreneurs actually do in their local context is better able to provide an understanding and explanation of an entrepreneurial phenomenon. According to Swedberg (2000), practice is grounded in the new economic sociology that emphasises the importance of embeddedness in the situational, organisational and institutional contexts. Thus, the explanatory power in theories of practice is an opportunity 'to relate, and to explain, what entrepreneurs do

in terms of their relationships with the structural elements within the society and economy in which they work' (Anderson & Ronteau, 2017, p.113). Accordingly, Gartner and Teague (2020, p.8) suggest that 'what entrepreneurs ''do'' matters more than ''who'' they are'. In other words, entrepreneurship research should appreciate and celebrate the "doings" (Champenois et al., 2020; Gartner & Teague, 2014), the everydayness and the heterogeneity of entrepreneurship (Van Burg et al., 2020; Welter et al., 2016). It therefore follows that entrepreneurship scholars and sociologists could benefit from doing much more micro, practice-oriented and highly contextual work on entrepreneurial processes and practices in order to capture their nuances (Jennings et al., 2013).

Taken together, these ongoing discussions in the entrepreneurship research arena point to the fact that the recent developments in sociological and practice-based studies have the potential to enrich and expand the entrepreneurship research domain in numerous ways.

2.2 Entrepreneurship as practice: grounding contemporary social practice theories into entrepreneurship studies

2.2.1 A practice approach in social sciences: a short overview

Since the millennium, practice theory has re-emerged as a salient conceptual lens for understanding social phenomena. The practice "turn" has been an important theoretical and epistemological trend in sociology and many neighbouring social science disciplines since its shift to understanding *social action* at the micro level, for example in organisations. The wave of sociological scholarship following the practice "turn" (Schatzki, 2005, 2019) has theoretically revitalised a number of the discipline's sub-fields, such as organisational sociology and a related field of organisation studies (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011; Gherardi, 2019; Nicolini, 2009; Orlikowski, 2002; Schatzki, 2005). The multiple ways of engaging with the practice "turn" can be seen in how scholars frame what they are doing: practice-based studies, the practice approach or the practice lens.

Practice theories have long roots and can be traced back to the legacy of philosophers like Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Giddens, Bourdieu and Foucault (see e.g. Nicolini, 2012). Some examples of prominent contemporary scholars working with practice theories are Gherardi, Nicolini, Reckwitz, Schatzki and Shove. Practice research recognises the need to overcome the longstanding and problematic dichotomies of agency/structure, human/non-human, body/mind and action/thought, as well as micro/macro levels. The practice tradition in the social sciences forefronts the notion that the nature and existence of all social phenomena are understood as forms of, or as rooted in, human practices (Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 2012). Hence, the central concept in practice theory is that of practices. It is about getting things done.

However, there is no uniform practice theory or definition of social practice, but rather a broad family of well-established theoretical approaches that share ontological assumptions and offer new ways of understanding and explaining social and organisational phenomena (Knorr Cetina et al., 2005; Nicolini, 2012). Scholars tend to operationalise the concept and theories of practice in very different ways (Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 2012). Nevertheless, the different approaches all see reality as an ongoing, recurrent accomplishment (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011) and suggest that practices are central to an understanding of the social world (Schatzki, 2012). Practice theories propose a perspective, or world view, that relates everyday practices to structures (Anderson & Ronteau, 2017). Despite the theoretical plurality and different definitions of practices amongst practice theorists, practice theories share some common and recognisable features, as outlined by Schatzki (2012).

First, a practice is an identifiable social phenomenon that is constituted by an organised constellation of different people's activities (e.g. presenting, running, mothering, networking, meeting practices and the like). It is also a social phenomenon in the sense that it embraces multiple people. According to Schatzki (2012), a practice is comprised of a nexus of people's "doings" and "sayings". The activities that compose a practice are organised by: 1) an understanding of how to do things that is conceptualised as

"disposition" (Bourdieu, 1990), "practical consciousness" (Giddens, 1984) or "practical understanding" (Schatzki, 2005; 2012), 2) rules or explicit instructions that orient the course of activity and 3) a teleoaffective structure that embraces practices and refers to their normative dimension, both in terms of ends and affectivity (Champenois et al., 2020; Thompson et al., 2020).

The second common tenet shared by practice theorists is that important features of human life should be understood as forms of, or as rooted in, human activity. Hence, practices are the "building blocks" of the social world (Thompson & Byrne, 2020). As Schatzki (2012, p.14) puts it, this idea 'opposes a wide variety of social system and structuralist theories that make systems principles or abstract structures and mechanisms central to social phenomena'. This implies that "larger" social phenomena, such as social ventures organisations, financial markets and so on incorporate an assemblage of various practices. Importantly, practices are not static and prescriptive, but fundamentally processual. In this sense, practice-based studies prioritise the movement, change and flow of activities that may, or may not, give rise to new social orders. Therefore, practices can be analysed as processes that unfold over time. In this sense, practices reproducing order leave space for individual agency, creativity, play, improvisation, individual performance and opportunities for change (Anderson & Ronteau, 2017).

Third, practice theorists argue that human activity also rests on know-how that cannot be put into words (Schatzki, 2012). This implies that practical know-how is kept alive through its everyday reproduction. As Thompson and Byrne (2020, p. 35) note, 'practitioners do not think or act based on an objective rationality, rather, they do whatever it makes sense to do what and what is to be done in the flow and circumstance of a given practice'.

The practice approach sees practices as always inherently social, and therefore not as individual property (Nicolini, 2012). In this sense, individuals are seen to carry out practices, but also serve as "carriers" of practices. Thus, a practice is distinct from both

the individual and behaviour as units of inquiry. While both individuals and behaviour can be observed in the practice, the main interest and unit of analysis is a practice (Teague et al., 2021).

Having made headway in sociology, anthropology, strategy and organisation studies, practice theories have now been introduced into entrepreneurship research to further our understanding of entrepreneurship. This is discussed in the next sub-section.

2.2.2 A practice "turn" in entrepreneurship studies: Entrepreneurship as practice as a theoretical lens

In the past decade, practice approaches have moved into the spotlight of entrepreneurship research. Scholars have sought to outline practice theories of entrepreneurship (Johannisson, 2011; Anderson & Ronteau, 2017) as a way of connecting to the larger practice "turn" in social sciences (Schatzki et al., 2012) and developing novel insights into the study of entrepreneurship (Thompson & Byrne, 2020). Below, I review some of the work conducted in entrepreneurship research that adopts practice theories.

Jack and Anderson (2002) are often considered pioneers in applying practice theories to explore the dynamic link between the entrepreneur and the context and to develop the concept of entrepreneurship as an embedded socio-economic process. By drawing on Giddens's structuration theory, they broke new ground by drawing attention to the structure and agency dualisms of the research. Since then, there has been an increase in studies employing practice theories. A plethora of work in the entrepreneurship research field has made exciting use of Bourdieu's theory of practice (Thompson & Byrne, 2020), including notions of "field", "capitals" and "habitus" (e.g. De Clercq & Voronov, 2009; Dodd, 2014; McKeever et al., 2014; Pret & Carter, 2017). For example, De Clercq and Voronov (2009) draw on Bourdieu's concept of habitus to reconceptualise the gaining of legitimacy by newcomers entering a field as the enactment of entrepreneurial habitus. Pret and Carter (2017) apply Bourdieu's conceptual framework to reveal that embeddedness in communities can lead social

entrepreneurs to collaborate with potential competitors. Although Bourdieu's practice theory is most commonly used, a limited number of studies have engaged with e.g. Schatzki's practice theory (e.g. Hydle & Billington, 2020; Keating et al., 2014), de Certeau's practice theory (e.g. Ramírez-Pasillas et al., 2021) and Goffman's interactionist sociology (Chalmers & Shaw, 2017). In their recent study, Ramírez-Pasillas et al. (2021) used de Certeau's practice theory to reveal novel mechanisms behind a rarely studied phenomenon, such as external venturing by next generation of members in family-owned businesses. More recently, using the lens of Giddens' (1984) structuration theory, Steiner et al. (2021) have argued that the development of the contemporary importance of SE lies in a combination of complex structural forces and the activities of agents who initiate, demand and impose change.

This growing interest in applying practice theories to the study of entrepreneurship is now emerging under the umbrella term Entrepreneurship as Practice (EaP). Thus, scholars connect with a larger practice "turn" taking place across the social sciences to entrepreneurship that enables them to deal with complex social phenomena, dissolve dualisms when conceiving of entrepreneurship, overcome the limitations of mainstream entrepreneurship research and produce "interesting research" for both researchers and practitioners (Champenois et al., 2020; Thompson et al., 2020). As this is still an emerging stream, the number of empirical studies is quite low, although an increasing interest in furthering EaP research is especially evident in the rise of special issues in leading journals (e.g. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development* 2020; *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior and Research* 2021; *Scandinavian Journal of Management* forthcoming).

In EaP research, practices are often defined as a set of interconnected "doings and sayings", activities and forms of communication (Schatzki, 2019; Nicolini, 2012). Literature adopting an EaP lens focuses on the relational and processual nature of entrepreneurial activities ("doings and sayings") as they are performed by individuals in interactions and through practices in specific entrepreneurial contexts, as well as in

the constitution and consequences of specific entrepreneurial practices (Thompson et al., 2020; Johannisson, 2011; Thompson & Byrne, 2020). Practices are accomplished in contexts and are thus local, even when "local" refers to online contexts (Cyron, 2021). Thus, emerging research drawing on EaP puts an emphasis on understanding the "doing" of entrepreneurship, which pushes scholars to examine the practices as they unfold and are experienced in real-time (Champenois et al., 2020; Gartner & Teague, 2020; Gross & Geiger, 2017).

EaP studies approach entrepreneurship as an unfolding process that emerges in and through the nexus of everyday practices (Thompson et al., 2020). Rather than celebrating the extraordinary actions of heroic individuals or the outcomes of entrepreneurship, the main interest is on the activities of ordinary entrepreneurs and how they get things done in complex settings (Johannisson, 2011). There are a number of reasons why applying an EaP lens is useful for studying entrepreneurship as an open-ended and situated social phenomenon and for challenging the taken-for-granted assumptions of entrepreneurship (social or not).

Practice theories represent a break with the dichotomous individualist and structural traditions that have dominated entrepreneurship research. In entrepreneurship research, agency is usually seen as being independent from the structures in which it is embedded (Thompson & Byrne, 2020). This results in a static understanding of how entrepreneurs act in the ways they do (Champenois et al., 2020). In contrast with the individualist tradition, which is currently associated with the generalised behaviour or mind of one individual, EaP approaches entrepreneurship as an assemblage of various practices carried out by multiple people (Thompson & Byrne, 2020).

At the same time, an EaP approach also breaks with structural theories of entrepreneurship, such as institutional theory, economic theories, a resource-based view of the firm (RBV), population ecology theory etc. These theories prioritise "social facts" and investigate their constraining or enabling power over entrepreneurship at different levels (Thompson & Byrne, 2020). As one of the sub-themes addressed in this

thesis is concerned with how social entrepreneurs resource their ventures through collaboration, using a practice theory suggests a very different view of resources as 'something that can only be understood as existing in and through the use that is made of them in specific social contexts' (Keating et al., 2014, p. 4). While RBV and resource dependency theory assume that resources are tangible and intangible assets that are valuable due to their innate qualities can be possessed or owned, practice theory offers a different lens by considering how individuals make assets *useful*. Thus, resources take on meaning as they are enacted through practice, rather than having meaning as innate features of their being. This perspective is called "resourcing" and reveals the dynamism of resources and the way they take on meaning in relation to practices (Feldman, 2004; Feldman & Worline, 2011, 2016). Furthermore, it facilitates an investigation into how individuals can interactively accomplish resourcing despite the limitations by engaging in dynamic and context dependent practices (Schneider et al., 2020). Therefore, the resourcing perspective assumes that potential resources only become resources when they are used in practice, and that the kind of resource they become depends on how they are used (Feldman & Worline, 2016).

As elaborated in the introductory chapter, collaboration is a critical and common social entrepreneurial activity and resourcing practice (de Bruin et al., 2017; McNamara et al., 2018). In this sense, studying (social) entrepreneurial resourcing through public collaboration with an EaP is a promising theoretical lens that can shed light on what social entrepreneurs actually do to resource their ventures through collaboration, as well as which resourcing practices they engage in to navigate the challenges that arise in collaborative settings. In doing so, adopting an EaP lens enables scholars to challenge the assumptions in RBV, resource dependency theory and institutional theory, all of which are commonly used as theoretical lenses in the literature on (social) entrepreneurial resourcing through collaboration.

Adopting an EaP approach gives scholars an opportunity to revisit their understanding of common entrepreneurial activities and behaviour, such as networking, resourcing,

persuading, strategising and so forth (Thompson & Byrne, 2020; Thompson et al., 2020). It also enables scholars to reveal and explain practices that are not currently considered in the entrepreneurship research. Thus, EaP can provide new insights into the reality of entrepreneurial life and give a more complex and nuanced picture of how entrepreneurship unfolds. Moreover, as practice theories emphasise the idea of sociomateriality (the ontological inseparability of the human and the material), EaP provides intriguing avenues for further research into the role of the body and materials in the performance of various practices.

Further, drawing on the fact that the practice approach sees practices as always inherently social and therefore rooted in collectively shared understandings (Reckwitz, 2002), an EaP lens can be adopted to study practitioners other than entrepreneurs who hold such collectively shared knowledge (Champenois et al., 2020), such as venture capitalists, social investors, business angels, collaborators etc. Hence, *entrepreneuring* is fundamentally a relational and collective endeavour (Johannisson, 2011, 2018).

2.2.3 Reappraising (social) entrepreneuring

Entrepreneuring as a theoretical concept originates from the seminal works of Johannisson (2011) and Steyaert (2007), in which a social ontology of "becoming" rather than "being" is enacted. This perspective is underpinned by the assumption that dynamics, relations, enactment, sensitivity to context and social embeddedness can only be understood in their context of occurrence (entrepreneurial practices) (Champenois et al., 2020). This move enriches an understanding of entrepreneurship, but perhaps more significantly it provides a conceptual space in which to investigate and explain the social transformation that is inherent in entrepreneuring (Antonacopoulou & Fuller, 2020; Berglund & Tillmar, 2015).

In the entrepreneurship literature, entrepreneuring appears to be used more commonly as a verb associated with doing entrepreneurship, or with social practice theory more specifically (Antonacopoulou & Fuller, 2020). The relationship between entrepreneuring and EaP is reflected by Johannisson (2011; 2018), who argues that

practice theory in the social sciences is an appropriate frame of reference for understanding entrepreneuring. Inspired by Schatzki's (2005, 2012) practice theory and adopting an ontology of becoming, Johannisson (2018, p. 48) asserts that entrepreneuring is a processual phenomenon constituted by everyday practice: 'it is about incessant venturing as an experiential mode of coping with an unknowable and ambiguous environment'. Reflecting on the ontology of becoming, entrepreneuring appears as consecutive temporary constellations of people, resources and activities that deal with challenges situated in time. Hence, entrepreneuring appears as ongoing improvisation (Johannisson, 2018). Although individual human agency is downplayed in Schatzki's (2005, 2012) practice theory, in entrepreneuring people play an important role, both in initiating order and in practices (Johannisson, 2018). As Chalmers and Shaw (2017) suggest, entrepreneuring affords the entrepreneurial actors a more dynamic and instrumental role in shaping their realities, and hence, theory is often found to be tethered more closely to concrete practices.

Given a shift of attention from the economic to the social dimensions of "entrepreneuring", social entrepreneuring has grown as an area of academic and practical importance (Barinaga, 2017; Berglund & Schwartz, 2013; Johannisson et al., 2016; Johannisson, 2018). Although social entrepreneuring can take many different forms, in this thesis the focus is on social entrepreneuring as a form of social venturing (Johannisson, 2018). Social ventures pursue prosocial objectives by adopting market-based approaches (Kimmitt & Muñoz, 2018). Such venturing is *social* in the relational processes it embeds, because achieving prosocial goals requires engagement with diverse stakeholders (Drencheva et al., 2021). Research has demonstrated the importance of relational processes for social venturing: these ventures engage diverse stakeholders and partners whose input is critical for their emergence, development and ability to achieve a greater social impact (Drencheva et al., 2021; Pret & Carter, 2017; Stephan et al., 2016).

Social entrepreneuring explicitly brings entrepreneurship out of the economic cage and presents it as a social force (Steyaert & Katz, 2004). The social dimension focuses on the social process that constitutes entrepreneuring and shifts the focus from heroic social entrepreneurs (Berglund & Schwartz, 2013) to the processes and practices in which multiple actors and stakeholders are made visible as related to entrepreneuring. This casts light on the collective nature of the work and the collective effort that is needed in processes of social entrepreneuring. While the focus on the individual entrepreneur still dominates mainstream SE research and is evident in the heroic stories in the media, a growing number of scholars draw attention to the need to foreground the collaborative work that entrepreneuring implies (Barinaga, 2017, 2020; de Bruin et al., 2017; Johannisson, 2018). Recognising the collective and processual features of social entrepreneuring, a recurrent and unifying theme in recent scholarship and practice is to look at the "doing" of social entrepreneuring: the processes and practices that are used to mobilise stakeholders and resources and bring about collaboration (Barinaga, 2017; de Bruin et al., 2017; Vasi, 2009), without forgetting that (social) entrepreneuring is embedded in social sites (Dodd et al., 2021; Jack et al., 2008).

Hence, in this thesis I depart from the premise that the present understanding of how social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing their social ventures and enabling public services to change is limited. I argue that we need to move beyond the narrow focus on static aspects towards studying entrepreneurial processes and practices. Thus, in this thesis I seek to answer the calls to focus on the phenomenon of "doing" (social) entrepreneuring (Anderson & Ronteau, 2017; Gartner & Teague, 2020; Johannisson, 2011, 2018; Steyaert, 2007). This implies that I am interested in the act, rather than the definition of SE, i.e. in what is done by people wanting to and actually being part of creating social impact and, ultimately, social change (Berglund & Schwartz, 2013; Kimmitt & Muñoz, 2018). As such, this thesis views social entrepreneuring as an unfolding process and the collective enactment that emerges in and through the nexus of practices (Thompson et al., 2020; Johannisson, 2018). In particular, the notion of

social entrepreneuring is about creatively pursuing prosocial objectives whilst staying financially sustainable and emphasises an open and processual view of collective entrepreneurial action as continuously unfolding and inherently creative (Hjorth et al., 2015; Johannisson, 2018). Therefore, scrutinising processes and practices for collaboration is important, because it allows micro-level social entrepreneurial activities and their outcomes to surface.

In moving forward with this study, practice theories and EaP are adopted in two of the empirical papers in order to study how social entrepreneurs resource their social ventures through collaboration and how they navigate the complex public sector terrain to bring about public collaboration and facilitate social venturing. However, there are methodological implications when striving to study entrepreneurial processes and practices. Real-time data provides an opportunity to study entrepreneurial processes and practices as they happen *in situ*, which can provide new perspectives on how those engaging in (social) entrepreneuring navigate challenges, analyse context and overcome social and institutional constraints on entrepreneurial behaviour (Chalmers & Shaw, 2017; Dodd et al., 2021). Therefore, I will expand on my methodological choices and present the studied cases in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This chapter outlines my position as a social science researcher and the assumptions I made in relation to my research problem. How did I methodologically equip myself to explore the "doing" of social entrepreneuring in enacting public collaboration? Also, and most importantly, how did I use specific methods to address my main research question – through which processes and practices do social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration? – and sub-questions, each of which are addressed in a separate paper. After a discussion about the methods used to carry out the research, the chapter concludes with a section on how methodological, language and ethical considerations were dealt with.

3.1 Entrepreneurship from a social constructionist perspective

The general assumption that this thesis rests on is that the world is socially constructed, as an outcome of human (inter)action (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Thus, I follow the perspective that the meaning of entrepreneurship as a social phenomenon is socially constructed (Anderson et al., 2012; Lindgren & Packendorff, 2009; Fletcher, 2006).

Social constructionism is about pluralism in entrepreneurship research; it allows us to understand entrepreneurship as a manifold and diverse phenomenon, provides knowledge about interaction processes and describes complexity, pointing to its everydayness (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2011; Lindgren & Packendorff, 2009). A social constructionist approach draws upon processes of structuration (Giddens, 1984); it attends to the interrelationship between agency and structure in the shaping of entrepreneurial practices and brings attention to the social and cultural situatedness and embeddedness of specific entrepreneurial practices (Anderson & Jack, 2002; Dodd et al., 2021; Fletcher, 2006; Steyaert, 2007). This implies that single individuals and institutional conditions per se become less interesting for empirical inquiry in entrepreneurship research.

Further, social constructionism is often closely related to an ontology of becoming, which implies an understanding of the world as a fundamentally dynamic place, i.e. the world is constantly in a state of "becoming" by means of social interactions, as outlined in the theory section. As such, reality does not exist in any ready-made sense, "being out there" for us to discover and analyse – rather, it is constantly emerging through events in our social life worlds (Steyaert, 2007). Today the socially constructed world appears to be ambiguous, liquid and messy, but therefore open to different interpretations and alternative enactments (Johannisson, 2018, 2020). This implies that entrepreneurship can be conceived as something constantly in emergence through a series of social events, which are not predictable or controllable. From this perspective, entrepreneurial processes could therefore be scrutinised as organic processes, which are 'continuously emerging, becoming, changing, as (inter)actors develop their understandings of their selves and their entrepreneurial reality' (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2009, p.35). Within an ontology of becoming, entrepreneuring thus appears as ongoing improvising and a creative process; entrepreneurs need to navigate an ambiguous environment that incessantly delivers unexpected situations and upcoming challenges that demands immediate attention, creativity, and spontaneity to keep the venturing process on track (Johannisson, 2018).

Accordingly, these philosophical underpinnings about social realities lead to particular methodological choices. In order to understand how entrepreneuring unfolds, we therefore need to study entrepreneurial processes and practices and follow them continuously over time. Consequently, we need to follow processes and practices in a longitudinal way and preferably in real time by embedding ourselves within entrepreneurial contexts (Dodd et al., 2021; Lindgren & Packendorff, 2009; Van Burg et al., 2020). My interest in this thesis is to understand the processes and practices through which social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing their social ventures and enabling public services to change. This calls for particular methodologies that 'bring the researcher into the stream of the actions and

interactions' (Johannisson, 2020, p. 140). These perspectives are reflected in my methodological choices described in the following.

3.2 Research approach

Given my interest in exploring processes and practices through which social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing their social ventures and enabling public services to change, I chose to conduct an exploratory qualitative study. As explained above, I was curious about what social entrepreneurs do, so my aim was to capture entrepreneurial activities, doings and interactions as they unfolded over time (Johannisson, 2011). Heeding the call for "immersed" empirical studies of (social) entrepreneuring, I engaged in fieldwork over time to get 'close to where things happen', which was my aim, namely to immerse myself in the realities of social entrepreneurs in order to understand their shared activities related to public collaboration and the complexity of entrepreneurial life (Steyaert & Landström, 2011; Thompson & Byrne, 2020). Overall, I find it important and fascinating to study processes and practices *as they happen*, which has particular methodological implications.

The overall thesis adopts a longitudinal multi-case case study approach (Côté-Boileau et al., 2020; Stake, 2005; Patton, 2002), which best fits the focus on social practices and processes in a locally bound context (Chatterjee et al., 2021; Vanderhoven et al., 2020). Case study is regarded as a suitable research strategy when the proposed research is exploratory and involves a novel and contemporary phenomenon. Not only are case studies good ways of producing thick descriptions (Geertz, 1993; Stake, 2005), they also allow the combination of various data collection practices. Using a limited number of cases (two) allowed me to study them over an extended period of time and in real-time (Jack et al., 2008), thereby providing an opportunity to gain a longitudinal perspective of social entrepreneurs' activities and generate an ethnographic understanding of how their collaborations unfolded in real-time. Hence, I was able to study the processes and practices as they happened *in situ*, something that can provide a new perspective on how social entrepreneurs navigate challenges, analyse context

and overcome social and institutional constraints (Chalmers & Shaw, 2017). Further, two cases provided a reasonable balance between having the necessary breadth from which to build theory and being able to pursue rich data due to the exploratory nature of the research. Accordingly, the approach provided me with rich, longitudinal, contextualised and real-time data. More than two cases could have resulted in data management issues – the two cases proved challenging in themselves due to the large amount of data accrued for each case and their location in different parts of the country. More cases would not have enabled an in-depth analysis of each case in the PhD programme timeframe of 3 years and the allocated research budget.

However, empirical papers 2 and 4 in the thesis adopt a single case design, which is justified by the fact that deep immersion in a single, exemplary case and its broader context offered a unique capacity for theory building and provided an opportunity for in-depth exploration of the relatively new phenomenon (Siggelkow, 2007; Stake, 2005). While an exploratory single-case study aims to investigate the phenomenon at hand in great detail and infer theoretical insights from in-depth observations, the selection of the particular case is usually purposive (Patton, 2002).

In this thesis, *social ventures* are considered cases. In making a decision to choose social ventures as cases, I was inspired by Stake's (2005) case study approach, considering the aim of the research and my philosophical orientation. According to Stake (2005, p.137), in collective case studies, which are instrumental cases extended to several cases, 'the case is of *secondary* interest, it plays a supportive role, and facilitates our understanding of something else'. Something else in this thesis is the "doing" of social entrepreneuring, in particular, processes and practices through which social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing social ventures and enabling public services to change. Therefore, the case still is looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinised, but all because this helps the researcher to pursue the external interest (Stake, 2005).

The selection of cases represents a fundamental aspect of building theory from case studies (Siggelkow, 2007; Stake, 2005). I make no claims to having conducted a comparative case study. I did not intend to *compare* the two cases or find a more generalised pattern. Rather, guided by the principle of ''crystallisation'' (Berglund & Schwartz, 2013), I sought to provide an in-depth understanding of what social entrepreneurs do when they enact public collaboration to accomplish resourcing and enable public services to change. To facilitate the identification of cases for this study, a purposive sampling with criteria applicable to the purpose of the study was chosen in order to increase the robustness of the findings (Jack et al., 2008; Pratt, 2009; Stake, 2005). Accordingly, the two social ventures of Betz and Nature Magic were purposively selected from a broader group of social ventures as cases for the study.

When choosing the sample I sought to identify social ventures that adopted market-based approaches to the solution of social problems, where profit was reinvested according to the purpose of the business or the communities they served, instead of maximising the economic return for shareholders and/or owners (Kimmitt & Muñoz, 2018). Thus, social ventures had to be organisations with a clear social mission and economically viable. This criterion was verified with the founders of the social ventures chosen for this study.

I also looked for social ventures in the educational, health and social sectors, all of which are traditionally associated with the public sector as a dominant provider in Norway (Vannebo & Grande, 2018). Such social ventures are heavily reliant on innovative solutions to maintain their distinctiveness from public sector services. The health and social service sector is a particularly important component of the Norwegian welfare state, in that there has been a lot of emphasis on co-creation and other novel collaborative solutions (Vannebo & Grande, 2018).

Furthermore, I searched for cases engaged in an *ongoing* collaboration with a municipality (or municipalities). The ongoing status of the collaboration was also crucial. In addition, the case selection was not restricted to specific forms of

collaboration, i.e. formal or informal, but was open to a broad range of forms beyond traditional order-performer models. Another important element was the time factor. The collaboration with municipalities was initiated at different times and was at different stages when the data collection was carried out. When I started my fieldwork, the collaboration between Nature Magic and Rock municipality was in an early phase, whereas that between Betz and Fjord municipality was in a more advanced phase with the intention of continuing the collaboration outside the project and moving into the implementation phase. When selecting the cases, I viewed this difference in the timeframes as an advantage, in that the two cases collectively provided the possibility of studying the different phases at the same time.

Yet another important consideration in the case selection was the issue of accessibility. As my intention was to employ ethnographic methods, I needed cases in which the social entrepreneurs would allow me to get alongside the actual "doing" of social entrepreneuring. Hence, I searched for cases that offered high access to rich data (Jarzabkowski & Seidl, 2008). Further, it was important that the informants were willing to discuss sensitive matters in an open, detailed and trusting manner. Based on this considerations, there was some concern that data collection might be hampered by issues of accessibility. As such, after the discussions with my supervisor, it was decided that the project would benefit from a pilot study before any final decisions on research design and methods were made. In addition, a realistic travel distance for rich qualitative data collection was considered important in terms of research budget and timing. While the first case was engaged in collaboration with a municipality located approx. 800 km from the social venture's head office, the proximity between the second case venture and the partner municipality was not that substantial (approximately 70 km).

Access to the first case, i.e. social venture Betz, came about after discussions with my embedded contacts who had professional connections with the social entrepreneur and founder of Betz. I will call her Helena. I spent some time doing a digital check on

the venture, its activities, collaborations etc. Helena and Betz were particularly interesting because Helena was a well-established social entrepreneur who had been running Betz since 2009 and had an extensive experience of collaboration with municipalities. Moreover, the venture addressed a government failure in the provision of quality welfare services. I contacted Helena via email in the autumn of 2019, described my research interests and requested her participation in the project. She expressed her enthusiasm and, after discussing it with colleagues, accepted the invitation and invited me to the Betz office for an initial interview. My extensive ethnographic access to Betz was enabled through the first rounds of interviews and negotiations with Helena. Her interest in the PhD project and my idea to follow the unfolding of a collaboration with Fjord municipality over time facilitated the longitudinal nature of this case study. Over time, as my fieldwork progressed and a high degree of trust developed with Helena it became possible to shadow her on her business trips to Fjord municipality. Helena facilitated my access to the internal meetings between Betz and the municipality employees involved in the collaboration process, although I also negotiated access with the municipality's employees via email communication, thereby generating opportunities for in-depth interviews and extensive periods of observation.

The second case was identified and selected at a later point in time – in the late spring of 2020. Although Helena provided me with tips about other social ventures that she thought may be worth contacting, I identified the second case myself. At that time, I was aware that the social investor company called Anders Capital supported social entrepreneurs in Norway and had also followed them on different social media platforms, such as Facebook and LinkedIn. I also participated in a SE workshop and attended the SE conference arranged by Anders Capital in May and December 2019 respectively, which paved the way for my future fieldwork and the selection of the second case venture. At the conference, the newly started collaboration between social venture Nature Magic and Rock municipality using the SIB model was presented and discussed. This sparked my interest in further research. Looking for access to the

second case in April 2020, I contacted one of the founders of Nature Magic via email and expressed my curiosity about the social venture and the ongoing collaboration with Rock municipality. After discussions with his colleagues and the social investor company, the founder replied that they found the project particularly relevant, were happy to participate and agreed to a first round of interviews. They also suggested other potential participants who could be involved in the collaboration process. My further ethnographic access to the meetings between Nature Magic and Rock municipality was initiated by the managing director of Anders Capital after the interviews, who remarked that I might be interested in being a ''fly on the wall'' in the working group meetings to learn about the unfolding of the SIB development. Thus, the managing director of Anders Capital became my gate-keeper and negotiated access to the meetings as an observer. This was important for a longitudinal approach, where extensive interactions were required with social entrepreneurs and other key stakeholders involved in the SIB embedding process over time.

However, before selecting Betz and Nature Magic as case ventures and starting my fieldwork, I conducted a pilot study on social venture Bromma during the first year of my PhD studies in order to check the feasibility of the proposed study, the level of accessibility and to evaluate the appropriateness of the interview guide. As a result, the pilot study helped me to make adjustments and revisions to the PhD project. These are elaborated on in the next sub-section and followed by the presentation of the two cases used in this thesis. The exact name of the case social ventures, the municipalities and their geographical locations and the activities of social ventures were anonymised. The names of participants were changed and pseudonyms used.

3.2.1 Pilot study: Social venture Bromma

Pilot studies are useful because they help to make adjustments and revisions to the main study. Hence, the main objectives of the pilot study were to check the feasibility of the proposed study and the level of accessibility, to gain knowledge about different ongoing collaborations with municipalities and to evaluate the appropriateness of the

interview guide and test it. For this purpose, I conducted a search for potential social ventures using a convenience sampling with emphasis on the accessibility of the location in terms of distance.

As a result, social venture Bromma, located in the northern part of Norway and founded in 2000, was selected as a case. The venture's core idea was to provide a new kind of services to inhabitants with physical disabilities. Initial contact was made with the managing director of the venture via email. The email provided basic details about the project, as well as a request to conduct semi-structured interviews with a managing director and other relevant administrative employees. After receiving a positive reply, I arranged three interviews: one with a managing director and two with administrative employees.

When preparing the pilot study, my main concern was about gaining ethnographic access. At that point in time I was already a member of the EaP community and aware that conforming to standards of rigour using an EaP lens required deep engagement in a case and its broader context and immersion in the concrete doings and practices of entrepreneuring (Johannisson, 2018). Furthermore, I was motivated by my curiosity about what was happening in real-time. Studying retrospective accounts of entrepreneurs did not appeal to me.

Through the in-depth semi-structured interviews I became aware of the diversity of collaborations with public sector organisations. Hence, based on experiences from the pilot interviews, the final interview guide was tailored and refined and the focus was narrowed down to one specific ongoing collaboration that was vital for the social venture. Another crucial outcome of the pilot study was my underestimation of the accessibility required to follow the unfolding of collaboration over time. In the case of Bromma, although the participants were interested in my PhD project, ethnographic access was challenging due to ethical issues related to the target group served by the social venture and the management's scepticism to the possibility observing meetings related to the collaborative activities due to the sensitive information involved.

After reflecting on the results of the pilot study and the overall objective of the research, it became clear that it would not be possible to do ethnographic field work on a specific collaboration over time to reveal which entrepreneurial processes and practices are at play. My goal and curiosity called for immersion into the site as I sought to 'follow the practices' as they unfolded (Johannisson, 2011). Hence, the pilot study was an important first step in the research design. After considering the issue of accessibility, I decided to make use of my professional connections to look for a case where I would have access to the site and be able to collect rich, contextualised and real-time data rather than retrospective interpretations of previous experiences. The data analysis from the pilot study *is not included* in the final thesis.

3.2.2 Case study 1: Social venture Betz

The limited liability (AS) social venture Betz, located in the southern part of Norway, was founded in 2009 by a portfolio entrepreneur with the pseudonym of Helena. Betz resulted from Helena's own experiences after her family's encounter with the Norwegian welfare state, i.e. the municipality as a welfare provider within the health sector, which did not have the services that Helena's family member needed. The venture's core business idea was to provide a new kind of services for people with substance abuse problems (anonymised). The team consisted of three people who were primarily engaged in management and administrative tasks: the founder Helena, the administrative leader Marianne and the professional advisor Henriette. At the time of the data collection, Betz also employed 42 part-time assistants working with clients.

Betz developed and provided evidence-based services that supplemented the public options to inhabitants with substance abuse problems. All the profits were reinvested into the current practice and the development of new opportunities. The venture also integrated social welfare and commercial logics by providing employment as assistants or mentors to a group of people experiencing challenges in finding work and re-entering the labour market. In addition to the main office, Betz had 8 offices spread across the country and was continuously establishing new offices in other

municipalities. At the time of the study, Betz was in a growth phase and scaling-up process, with plans for internationalisation and franchising.

At the time of the data collection Betz had an ongoing collaboration with Fjord municipality on the West-Coast of Norway with some 60 000 inhabitants. At the time of the study Fjord had a conservative political leadership and promoted itself as a pioneering municipality, innovative and focused on problem-solving. In 2012, Fjord municipality launched a major plan for the improvement of its health and care services. According to the plan, Fjord was to ensure the provision of high-quality services for inhabitants with substance abuse problems (anonymised) by engaging in collaborations with external actors. In 2012, Helena met two representatives from Fjord municipality, here called Jennifer and Bertha, at the innovation conference and established a first contact.

Helena had been in contact with Jennifer and Bertha since 2012 with a view to a possible collaboration. In 2017 Helena managed to negotiate a contract with Fjord municipality for a two-year collaboration project. The collaboration implied that Helena's venture, in close collaboration with the municipality's employees, adapt the venture' services and co-create services that matched the municipality's resources and needs. The collaboration also addressed unemployment by means of the recruitment of part-time assistants in Fjord.

When I started my fieldwork in October 2019, the two-year collaboration was about to be renegotiated and continue outside the project confines. Meanwhile, in January 2020 Fjord municipality was to merge with the neighbouring Island and Hill municipalities and become Headlands municipality. The new municipality still had a conservative political leadership and promoted itself as a pioneering, innovative and problem-solving organisation. However, as with all mergers, getting the new organisation to become one unit was a struggle.

During my fieldwork in November 2019, a critical incident occurred when the municipal employees involved in the collaboration process received the news that the newly formed Headlands Municipality's budget had been severely reduced and meant that the collaboration could not be continued. This news came when I was shadowing social entrepreneur Helena on one of her business trips to Fjord municipality. This serendipitous event in my research process triggered an opportunity to observe the practices pursued by the social entrepreneur in situ in response to this critical incident in the collaboration. This offered a particularly interesting context in which to study *resourcing practices*, in that the critical incident spurred a broad repertoire of entrepreneurial practices to keep the collaboration alive and the resources flowing. It was here that I decided to turn the serendipitous occasion into a research opportunity and investigate resourcing practices as they unfolded.

Heeding the call for "immersed" empirical studies of entrepreneurial processes and practices (Thompson et al., 2020; Van Burg et al., 2020), I conducted a longitudinal study of this case venture and its collaboration with Fjord municipality over an eight-year period. Seven of these years were retrospective, while the final year – from 2019 to 2020 (see Figure 1 for a timeline of key milestones in Paper 2) – was in real-time.

3.2.3 Case study 2: Social venture Nature Magic

Established more recently in 2016, the second case – social venture Nature Magic – was (co)founded by three male social entrepreneurs with considerable professional experience of developing life skills among different groups of people. The venture had its headquarters in the eastern part of Norway and focused on the well-being of different groups of people – young people, adults and families struggling to strengthen their interaction skills with others and cope with stress in their everyday lives. Their goal was to strengthen individual skills, reduce stress and provide joy in people's everyday lives through immersion in nature.

At the time of the study, Nature Magic was in the process of delivering its services to Rock municipality, which enabled me to follow the collaboration process in real-time

through interviews and observations. The social venture received bridge funding from the Norwegian social investor company Anders Capital in order to deliver their services to Rock municipality. The municipality needed to strengthen its preventive services for children and young people, especially young people at risk of not completing upper secondary education. In response to this need, Nature Magic offered its services that had been successfully trialled for several years.

In 2019, Nature Magic, Anders Capital and Rock municipality negotiated a potential financial model that each party could agree on. As a result of these negotiations, the three parties agreed to test the Social Impact Bond model and signed a 3-year pilot project agreement to test the services. As such, Nature Magic was funded through a hybrid SIB model, with the agreement to provide services to Rock municipality from the autumn of 2019 to the autumn of 2022, while Rock municipality was obliged to sustain the services internally starting from the autumn of 2022 if the results were achieved. The short-term goal of the initiative was to achieve improvements related to well-being, reduced stress and motivation. The long-term goal was an increased degree of completion of young people's upper secondary school education. This agreement implied that if the predetermined results were achieved, Rock municipality would commit to continuing the implementation of the services and repay Anders Capital up to 50% of the investment. In the case of poor performances, Rock municipality would not have any financial obligation to repay anything. The key characteristics of two cases are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics of the case social ventures

Key characteristics	Case 1 Betz	Case 2 Nature Magic
Year founded	2009	2016
Organisation	AS, a limited liability company owned by entrepreneur Helena Profits are reinvested into current practice and development of new opportunities	AS, a limited liability company owned by 3 social entrepreneurs Profits are reinvested into current practice and development of new opportunities
Social entrepreneur	1 founder Helena	3 co-founders
No. of employees	2 administrative employees 42 part-time assistants/mentors	3 full-time employees 2 part-time mentors
Products/services	Delivery of services Work integration Developing innovative methods / tools R & D	Delivery of services Developing innovative methods / tools
Funding	Mostly from selling services R&D grants (Innovation Norway, Research Council of Norway etc.)	Selling services Funded through the SIB model (the social investor company)
Mission	Help people with substance abuse problems live active lives	Improve the well-being of young people and adults
Location	Medium-size municipality in the southern part of Norway	A large municipality in the eastern part of Norway

Social entrepreneur's education & work experience	Higher education, several degrees (business, management) Private sector: Business Development & Innovation Public sector: Business Development & Innovation Tourism	Higher education, several degrees (media, management) Private sector Public sector
Collaboration with municipality	Fjord municipality (from 01.01.2020 Headlands municipality after a merger with Island and Hill municipalities)	Rock municipality
Other parties involved	None	Social investor company Anders Capital
Year collaboration started	2017	2019
Collaboration form/model	A two-year co-creation project followed by an implementation phase, a collaboration continuation outside the project which is to be (re)negotiated in 2019-2020	A hybrid model (Social Impact Bond model with elements of Social Bridging Finance) Two-year pilot project

3.3 Data collection practices

The PhD project consists of four independent yet interrelated papers, each of which contributes to addressing different aspects of the main RQ. All four papers aim to make novel contributions that shed light on how social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing their social ventures and enabling public services to change. A systematic literature review, ethnographic methods such as shadowing and observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews and informal conversations, email correspondence and documentation were all part of the thesis's methodological repertoire.

As illustrated in Table 3, the research designs (single vs multiple case study) and data material used vary between each of the four research papers. The methodological choices made will be elaborated below, with the main elements of the research design presented in Table 3. The data collection approach and its unfolding process are demonstrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Data collection approach

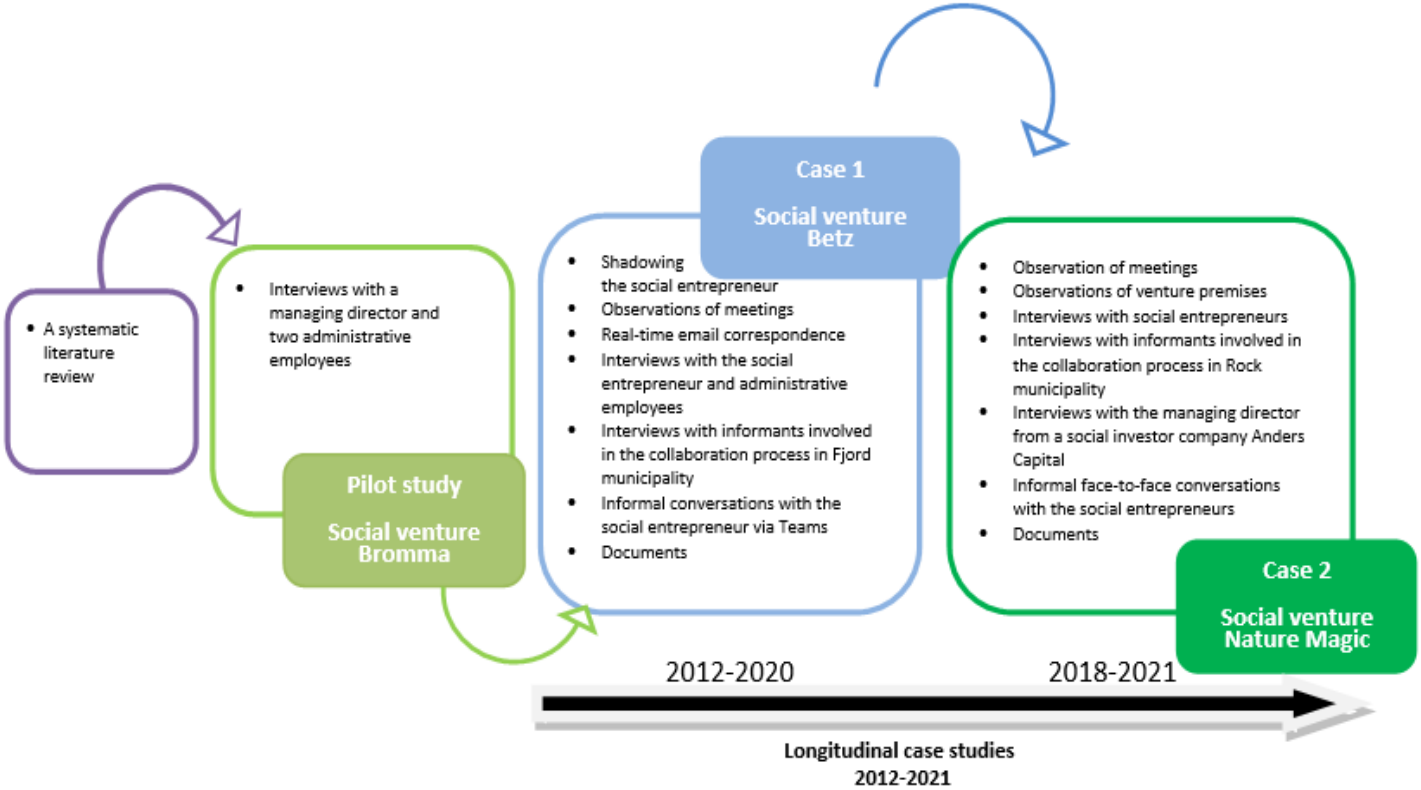

Table 3. Overview of the research design in four papers

Paper 1	Kosmynin, M. Social Entrepreneurship Organisations and Collaboration: Taking Stock and Looking Forward	
	Research objective	(i) map out the interdisciplinary literature on SEO collaboration, using the analysis to appraise the key research themes and (ii) outline suggestions for where future scholarship in this domain might be directed by identifying important research questions for further scrutiny
	Research question	(i) What is the state-of-the-art of the research on collaboration in the context of SEOs?; (ii) What are the emerging themes of interest for SE research?; and (iii) What are the implications for future research suggested by the findings?
	Research design	Systematic literature review
	Data source	40 peer-reviewed journal articles listed in the Web of Science and Scopus databases
	Data analysis	(1) descriptive categorisation of articles, (2) identification of higher order themes using an 'open coding' approach
Paper 2	Kosmynin, M. & Ljunggren, E. Everyday heroes and everyday chores: How social entrepreneurs do resourcing through collaboration	
	Research objective	to unpack the resourcing practices pursued by a social entrepreneur in the context of a critical incident in collaboration with a municipality
	Research question	How do social entrepreneurs resource social ventures through collaboration with a municipality? What resourcing practices do they employ when responding to a critical incident jeopardizing collaboration?
	Research design	a longitudinal ethnographic case study, a single case study
	Data source	Shadowing, observation, real-time email correspondence, interviews and informal conversations, documents
	Data analysis	Four-stage analytical process with the practice approach as a sensitising frame
Paper 3	Kosmynin, M. Playing around with the 'rules of the game': social entrepreneurs navigating the public sector terrain in pursuit of collaboration	
	Research objective	to provide a better understanding of the lived experiences of social entrepreneurs when engaging with municipalities to enact the context for collaboration in a Norwegian welfare state
	Research question	How do social entrepreneurs employ different practices to navigate the complex public welfare setting to bring about collaboration with municipalities and facilitate social venturing?
	Research design	a case study approach, a multiple case study

	Data source	Interviews, follow-up conversations by Skype or Microsoft teams, shadowing and observations, archival data
	Data analysis	Thematic analysis through first and second cycle coding in MAXQDA
Paper 4	Kosmynin M. & Jack, S. Alternative investing as brokering: The process of embedding a Social impact bond model in a local context	
	Research objective	Explore the embedding process of a SIB model into a local context
	Research question	What are the embedding processes of a collaborative SIB model in a local context?
	Research design	A longitudinal case study approach, a single case study
	Data source	Interviews, observation, documents
	Data analysis	'Gioia-inspired' process of analysis, the constant comparative method, Coding in MAXQDA

3.3.1 Systematic literature review

Starting with an SLR (Kraus et al., 2020; Short, 2009; Tranfield et al., 2003) was valuable in the early stage of the thesis in order to take stock of the interdisciplinary literature related to collaboration in the context of SEOs, which includes social ventures and outlines suggestions for where future scholarship in this domain might be directed. The starting point for the SLR was the call for more research on collaboration in the context of SE and SEOs (de Bruin et al., 2017). This area of research spans across different fields of study, contexts, varied theoretical perspectives and multiple units of analysis, which resulted in high fragmentation and diversity, both of which needed to be addressed. As such, by mapping out the literature on SEO collaboration and identifying important research questions for further scrutiny, the SLR informed and laid the foundation for the PhD thesis. In particular, the SLR was helpful in identifying the research gaps in this area of research, which are addressed in papers 2, 3 and 4.

The SLR paper employs a journal-led search of peer-reviewed articles in two bibliographical databases services – Scopus and Web of Science – which are among the largest multidisciplinary sources in social sciences and make the search more comprehensive. Following recent reviews in entrepreneurship research (Pret & Cogan, 2019), I limited the search to articles published in ranked journals, as per the Chartered Association of Business Schools Journal Guide 2021 (ABS), to identify a robust sample. When searching in selected journals, there are limitations in terms of the risk of potentially excluding relevant articles. Nevertheless, restrictions on included journals were seen as an important way of ensuring feasibility and a systematic and reliable approach. A step-by-step SLR process is outlined in paper 1. The final sample included 40 articles for further analysis. The articles were analysed following two main rounds of coding: (1) a descriptive categorisation of the articles and (2) the identification of higher order themes.

Overall, the SLR enabled me to review the literature on collaboration in the context of SEOs, which was important for the further development of the papers in the thesis, as well as for the appropriate theories and methodologies.

3.3.2 Shadowing

Shadowing (Czarniawska, 2007; Gill, 2011; Nicolini, 2009) was used in the case of Betz and serves as one of the main sources of data in paper 2. As Helena allowed access to her social entrepreneurial life, this case offered a unique opportunity to gain insights into the "doing" of social entrepreneuring (Berglund & Schwartz, 2013). Shadowing stems from traditional ethnographic methods in that it involves a researcher closely following a subject over a period of time to investigate what individuals actually do in the course of their everyday lives (McDonald, 2005). Often, the observer ''walks with'' the person being observed (Raulet-Croset et al., 2020). While shadowing, the researcher is a guest in the participant's world. Thus, shadowing is invaluable for teasing out practices or the repertoire of actions that reflect people's understandings of ''how to get things done'' in complex settings.

I leaned towards ethnographical fieldwork of particular situations of interest over time as a way of understanding the actual entrepreneurial doings related to collaboration and the meaning attributed to them. Coupled with the fact that shadowing research does not only rely on the accounts of practitioners, but views them directly, means that shadowing can produce the sort of first-grained, detailed data that facilitates the study of entrepreneurial phenomena of interest as they occur (Thompson & Byrne, 2018). As these mundane aspects of entrepreneurial life are difficult to capture, and entrepreneurial action is one of those activities that is constantly constructed through daily routines, the choice of shadowing as a method was especially compatible with the aim of the thesis and therefore makes an important methodological contribution. As such, I found shadowing to be key to understanding entrepreneurial practices and processes.

The shadowing took place whilst accompanying social entrepreneur Helena to business meetings with representatives of Fjord municipality and to the local offices of the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) in October and November 2019. Thus, I, as the observer, not only "walked with" (Raulet-Croset et al., 2020) social entrepreneur Helena, I also travelled with her. During the shadowing I engaged in ''deep hanging up'' by accompanying Helena on long-distance journeys related to the collaboration process with Fjord municipality. This approach enabled me to follow the social entrepreneur "on her heels" (Danner-Schröder & Ostermann, 2020) from the beginning to the end of a working day and to participate in all the settings in which the entrepreneur was involved. This led me to very diverse settings. Specifically, I joined the social entrepreneur on all kinds of transport, during lunch breaks, coffee breaks and city tours. I shadowed her as she prepared for the meetings on the bus and in the waiting rooms and observed what she did when interacting with the municipal employees involved in the collaboration process. This included shadowing and observing her presentation of Betz in PowerPoint presentations, her reactions and responses to the questions posed and how she did it, hanging out with her at lunch times and during walks around the Fjord premises, listening to her talk about particular

situations and experiences related to her life as a social entrepreneur and her philosophical reflections on the meaning of life. While shadowing, I not only observed, but also asked Helena questions and sought explanations and/or interpretations: what she thought about a particular encounter, her impressions of meetings, elaborations on her actions or reasons for certain conduct and talking to her about why she did things the way she did. In addition, while travelling together I was able to grasp the real-time activities and clarify encounters from the meetings. Moreover, as McDonald (2005) puts it, shadowing not only allows the observation of daily routines and personal insights, but also systematically collects and records their contextual settings, immediate behaviour and reactions to particular events.

As the shadowing process was very intense, and I had spent some time at the Betz premises interviewing Helena and her colleagues before engaging in the shadowing, it resulted in trusting and engaged connections. It seemed to me that Helena felt at ease and was very open, often engaging in informal conversations with me. She asked me if I knew any European social entrepreneurship conferences, about my research experience etc. In this way, the shadowing process resulted in a more reciprocal relationship between us, rather than a purely functional mechanism in which knowledge was simply taken and absorbed (van der Weele & Bredewold, 2021).

The shadowing was open-ended. I constantly took notes about the social entrepreneur's activities that I observed. I tried hard not to interpret any given situation whilst in the field (Adler & Adler, 1994). I tried to make notes about the activities, encounters and conversations in situ, but the main rule was to write up as much as possible at the end of each day. In those situations where notetaking was difficult, I wrote down my observations and feelings the next day. Taking notes on the move was challenging, as Helena often engaged in informal conversations with me, which felt natural in such a setting. My field notes covered detailed descriptions of the social entrepreneur's activities, factual information during the observations, Helena's

answers to my questions and my reflections after each day. I transcribed the field notes from the shadowing and imported the data into the qualitative analytical tool MAXQDA.

Although it was very demanding, the shadowing was unbelievably rewarding and provided a rich account of social entrepreneurial activities (Mauksch et al., 2017). As previously mentioned, the case venture Betz and Fjord municipality are located in different parts of Norway, which involved much travel to the research site (flights, trains, buses and places to stay during the fieldwork). Combined with travelling, spending up to 7 hours per day with one person in a context in which I was focused on trying to understand and grasp the entrepreneurial activities, practices, nonverbal language and emotions, asking questions about this and reflecting on the responses, required a large investment of time and energy (Berglund & Wigren, 2014). Sometimes I felt overwhelmed at how intensive Helena's days were with numerous encounters and commuting.

Further, doing ethnography is considered an emotional experience and shadowing Helena was sometimes an emotionally laden endeavour. At certain moments during my fieldwork I had strong emotional experiences, in particular when a critical incident occurred that jeopardised the collaboration process with Fjord while shadowing Helena. It was almost impossible to stay neutral in that situation and I became emotionally involved and found myself comforting, supporting Helena and expressing empathy for what had happened. I reflect on my experience with shadowing in greater detail in the sub-section ''Methodological reflections''.

3.3.3 Observation

Observations (Gold, 1958) were conducted in both cases and involved taking part in meetings and informal gatherings, such as lunch and coffee breaks. During the observations I had been introduced as and treated like "a fly on the wall" researcher, meaning that I observed as an outside researcher from Nord University. In the case of Betz, when introducing me to municipal employees during meetings and in emails before them, Helena presented me as a PhD student doing research on social

entrepreneurship and using Betz as a case study in the PhD project. Further, Helena stressed that it was very important and useful that an external observer was following the unfolding of the collaboration over time. Speculating on this, I had a feeling that my presence as a researcher gave Helena and her venture more legitimacy as a *social* entrepreneur when interacting with municipal employees (Berglund & Schwartz, 2013). In this sense, my role as the researcher might have changed from being just an observer to more of a participant.

I was given permission to attend key collaboration project meetings between Betz and Fjord municipality from October 2019 to November 2019 as well as meetings between Betz and the local offices of the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) in Fjord municipality. These meetings involved stakeholders from the Fjord municipality: Jennifer, a project manager, and Bertha, a project coordinator, both of whom were directly involved in the collaboration process with Betz and the head of a local NAV office. As a result, I was able to observe not only the unfolding process of collaboration, but also understand how practitioners collectively collaborate and the actual meanings and activities around the practices (Tillmar, 2020). Observations helped me to "zoom in" and identify the doings and sayings of the social entrepreneurs and other practitioners (municipal employees in this case) and illuminate the effects of social entrepreneuring that are not always articulated in interviews.

In the case of Nature Magic, the managing director of the social investor company negotiated my access to the working group meetings as an observer. As a result, over the course of my fieldwork I accompanied the social entrepreneurs twice to Rock municipality and was able to observe the meetings taking place at the Rock municipality premises in August 2020. The founders of Nature Magic gave me a ride to Rock municipality and back and allowed me to observe their interactions before the meetings and conduct follow-up interviews. I kept a research diary for taking notes of the meetings, the participants' behaviour and informal conversations. Specifically, I "zoomed in" on how micro-interactions between the various participants played out in

context and place, the surrounding conditions and other contextual information (Jack, 2005; Van Burg et al., 2020). Thus, the field notes of these observations were useful for contextualising the study and complemented the interviews and documents used in paper 4. The observations were not limited to internal meetings: I also took part in informal activities such as coffee breaks at the premises of Nature Magic and was able to take photographs of the surroundings and the solution developed by the venture. Furthermore, I participated in a national workshop and annual conference in 2019, at which the Rock municipality employee was invited to speak about the SIB model just after the collaboration agreement between Nature Magic, Rock municipality and Anders Capital was signed.

During the observations I used an observation guide and took notes of what the participants discussed and, whenever it was possible, I recorded meetings and transcribed parts of the conversations to complement the field notes. After these observations, I debriefed informants to clarify the meaning of statements and interactions.

3.3.4 Real-time email correspondence

Emails were used as another valuable source of data in the case of Betz. Using emails as a source of data provides researchers with very rich information that may enable them to develop an understanding of phenomena in a way that is similar to observation but without actually being present at the site (Neergaard & Ulhøi, 2007). Moreover, emails offer the researcher the opportunity to come as close to the 'reality' as possible.

Establishing a fairly high level of trust with social entrepreneur Helena was necessary in order to be granted access to the *real-time* email correspondence. I was copied into the email conversations (using the "cc" function) between Helena and the representatives of Fjord municipality. I also had to seek permission from all the external informants – the representatives of Fjord municipality. Hence, I was copied into the email communications between Helena and Fjord municipality from October to December 2019 and received real-time emails in order to stay updated about the

unfolding process of collaboration and decision-making without being actually present at the site. In early January 2020, after the merger of Fjord municipality with Island and Hill municipalities, Helena decided not to copy me into the email communication in order to safeguard the trust she had developed with representatives of Fjord municipality over time. Instead, Helena suggested having regular conversations via Skype/Microsoft Teams so that I could follow the unfolding process and be kept updated on the decision-making.

Real-time email correspondence appeared to be a rich source of data, allowing me to see what was going on in a way that is similar to observation. Hence, reading real-time emails felt like being present at meetings or listening in on telephone conversations. As emails were not created for the purpose of this research, the story unfolding over the emails reflected what happened and how key actors perceived what happened. Through studying real-time interaction data from emails, it was possible to capture how key actors negotiated constraints as they emerged over time and how the social entrepreneur Helena overcame social and institutional constraints on entrepreneurial behaviour. Emails also appeared to be an essential source containing information not found in other sources.

3.3.5 Interviews and informal conversations

Consistent with most qualitative studies, in-depth interviews using a semi-structured approach constitute another source of data for this thesis. Interviews are effective for enriching the empirical data. Over a period of approximately one year, between October 2019 and October 2020, I conducted fourteen semi-structured interviews with social entrepreneurs (the founders of case social ventures), administrative employees in the case ventures, municipal employees (the positions are detailed in Table 4) and the managing director of the social investor company in either English or Norwegian depending on the respondents' preferences. The rationale for this methodological choice was to obtain depth and detail in the qualitative interviews, ensure that

accurate meanings were captured during the data collection and avoid ''lost in translation'' issues (see the sub-section ''Language reflections'' for more details).

Participants were "purposefully" sampled (Denzin, 1989; Patton, 2002), which meant purposefully seeking information-rich respondents for study. With this in mind, respondents were identified and chosen through engagement with the social entrepreneurs from the two case ventures who suggested other potential respondents involved in the collaboration process and helped to manage issues relating to access. Some of the most relevant participants were interviewed longitudinally. In particular, the interviews with one of the founders of Nature Magic and the managing director of the social investor company were conducted in two waves, and with social entrepreneur Helena from Betz in three waves. The first round of interviews was exploratory in nature, while the second and third rounds were more specific due to the iterative and cumulative nature of the fieldwork process and focused on the unfolding of collaborations over time, thus allowing me to clarify points and gain insights into what was going on in the collaboration process. This process helped to increase the reliability of the study.

Opening discussions usually took place over the ritual of a cup of tea or coffee on arrival. I facilitated conversation-like interviews following an interpretivist approach and gave the respondents considerable space and freedom to co-create and extend the discussion. This approach made it feel natural to react, reply and take slightly different routes during the interviews, as required. For example, comments like 'That's interesting, can you elaborate a little more on that?' were frequently used to develop more insightful descriptions of experiences (McKeever et al., 2014). Furthermore, during the interviewing I tried to co-create knowledge by constantly maintaining my curiosity about the ordinary and encouraging respondents to talk about what may seem like common-sense aspects of their activities. For example, I asked the social entrepreneurs to describe their daily activities related to maintaining collaboration in detail. Before each interview I did my "homework", i.e. examining relevant archival

records from online sources (e.g. media releases, social media posts, venture websites etc.) about social entrepreneurs and their ventures, collaborations under investigation and the activities of the social investor company. In the case of Betz, I came across some intriguing interviews that Helena had given to different organisations supporting SE, which were available online. I became curious about some of Helena's sayings in those interviews, which led me to raise more specific questions than those in the interview guide. All the interviews were carried out face-to-face at the respondents' premises, parts from three interviews that were carried out via online video calls on Microsoft Teams and video-recorded due to the Covid-19 travel restrictions.

I developed two sets of separate interview guides consisting of open-ended questions, which were designed to prompt conversation and enable me to pursue emerging lines of enquiry: one interview guide for the representatives from case social ventures and another for representatives from the municipalities involved in the collaboration process. At a later stage, I developed a third interview guide for the social investor company, as they were a key stakeholder in the collaboration process. I developed the interview guides in English and then translated them into Norwegian for those respondents who felt more comfortable being interviewed in Norwegian. The interview guides in English are available in the Appendix. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed, with three of the interviews being video recorded.

All the interviews started with a general request for the respondent to tell me about themselves and the story behind the venture/ collaboration they represented. This elicited the recollection of vivid and often very detailed stories. Subsequent questions for the social entrepreneurs and administrative employees in the case ventures focused on the characteristics and history of social venture, its mission and changes over the years, retrospective accounts of how the collaboration started, factors shaping the collaboration process, regular entrepreneurial activities to maintain the collaboration and how challenges were dealt with. With regard to the municipal employees, I asked them about their experience of collaboration with social ventures

and narrowed the questions to the specific collaboration under investigation. The in-depth interviews with the social investor were very lengthy and vivid and took the form of conversations and reflexive dialogues. The managing director of Anders Capital was asked to discuss in detail the company's activities, professional and personal history and then chronologically reconstruct a story behind the embedding process of SIB. I was curious about the company's motivation for this, so many questions revolved around investor stakes. Furthermore, in the case of the social entrepreneurs and social investor company I was told detailed stories about different aspects of social entrepreneuring and public collaboration, which made a substantial contribution to my empirical material. The interviews also provided powerful insights into their interactions, relationships, lived experiences and the meanings they assigned to their actions, as well as the broader contexts in which they took place (Gherardi, 2019). By drawing on the rich insights from the interviews, I was then able to make sense of how the past development laid the foundation for social ventures to enact collaboration with municipalities, as well as gain the social entrepreneurs' reflections on the collaborative processes and practices.

The interviews lasted between 30 and 190 minutes and were audio/video recorded and transcribed in full. The transcribed interviews were imported into qualitative data analysis software, MAXQDA, which enabled the efficient organising and coding of the data. In the case of the interviews collected in Norwegian, I reserved translation into English for significant themes and phrases (see the sub-section ''Language reflections'' for more details).

In addition, in the case of Betz, the interviews were complemented with informal conversations. I had five regular informal conversations with Helena between January and March 2020 to keep me updated about the collaboration process and her activities. These were video conversations on Skype or Microsoft Teams and varied in length between 20 and 40 minutes. In the case of Nature Magic, I also had 2 informal

conversations with the founders, which revolved around the unfolding of the collaboration, the challenges faced and the results.

3.3.6 Documents

Both case ventures granted me access to their internal documents for the study. For example, I collected meeting agendas and minutes, PowerPoint presentations, monitoring progress reports, evaluation reports and collaboration contracts. In the case of Betz, the PowerPoint presentations were accompanied by Helena's verbal presentation during the meetings with Fjord municipality employees, the head of the local Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration office (NAV) and representatives of the main NAV office in the county in which Fjord municipality is located.

In addition, I collected archival data from online sources (e.g. social media, websites, online newspapers). Basically, I used the archival data to get to know the background of the social ventures and their activities, e.g. the history of the ventures, the media coverage of the collaborations etc. Moreover, collecting secondary material addressed weaknesses linked to retrospective questions. In the case of Betz, the archival data (e.g. Helena's interviews accessible online) was also used to ask her specific questions during interviews to clarify some of the issues that I found interesting to follow up on.

Taken together, a combination of immersive ethnographic methods, such as shadowing, observation, real-time email correspondence together with interviews, informal conversations and documents allowed for data triangulation (Denzin, 1989; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Collecting real-time data, created during the process that is being observed, in combination with more reflective, retrospective data such as interviews allowed to capture processes and practices as they happen *in situ*, avoiding the problems related to retrospective accounts and to explore respondents' perceptions, histories and lived experiences, as well as the meanings they assign to their actions. This combination made the data source for the analyses richer. Furthermore, the extensive use of documentation also helped to facilitate in-depth interviews and pose specific questions based on archival data.

Table 4. Data collection practices used across four papers

Data		Case		Details	№ & Timeframe	Used in papers			
		1	2			1	2	3	4
Ethnographic data	Shadowing	o		An intensive ethnographic data collection process. I shadowed a social entrepreneur Helena on her trips to the Fjord municipality and other municipalities. Different places, settings and situations	Fall 2019		X		
	Observation	o		Observed the meetings between Helena and representatives of three municipalities and NAV	5 (2019)		X	X	
			o	Observed at the conference	1 (2019)				X
			o	Observed the working group meetings between social entrepreneurs (founders) and representatives of Rock municipality	2 (2020)			X	X
			o	Observed two founders preparing for the meeting in a car during the trip to Rock municipality	1 (2020)			X	X
		o	o	Social ventures' office premises: physical space, size, location The drawings of the method/solution developed by social ventures	4			X	
Other types of data: Interview	Interviewing	o		Semi-structured interviews with founder Helena (=3) and administrative employees (administrative leader and professional advisor) (=2)	5 (2019 - 2020)		X	X	
		o		Semi-structured interviews with representatives of Fjord municipality: project manager and project coordinator	2 (2019 – 2020)		X		
			o	Semi-structured interviews with 2 (co)founders	3 (2020)			X	X
			o	Semi-structured interviews with representatives of Rock	2 (2020)				X

				municipality: executive officer for childcare and school advisor					
			o	Semi-structured interviews with the Managing Director of the social investor company	2 (2020)				X
	Conversations	o		Regular informal conversations via Teams & Skype with Helena	5 (2020)		X	X	
			o	Informal conversations with two founders	2 (2020)			X	X
	Real-time Emails	o		Real-time email correspondence between Helena and Fjord employees (Jennifer & Bertha), and NAV	75 pages		X		
			o	Email correspondence between the researcher and the founder	8 pages				X
	Documents	o	o	Internal reports, contracts, meeting agendas and minutes	210 pages		X		X
		o	o	PowerPoint presentations	7		X		X
		o	o	Web pages and media articles featuring the two social ventures and their collaborations	7		X		X
	Articles			40 articles included in the sample for an SLR		X			

3.4 From data to papers – the writing up

In this section I outline the analytical approaches used in the papers constituting the thesis and how the internal validity of the findings was achieved. All the data was imported into the MAXQDA software program, thereby enabling an efficient organising and coding of data. I was also able to import my field notes, observation guides, email correspondence, collected archival data and interview recordings directly into my MAXQDA project, which was divided into two cases, i.e. Betz and Nature Magic. All the interviews were transcribed in the software. In order to familiarise myself with the data and find out what was going on in my empirical material, the analysis required an intense period of reading and re-reading the field notes, observation guides, emails, transcripts and archival data.

Moving from raw data to processed data, findings and eventually theory is a creative process and is therefore also unique for each study. Each paper in this thesis takes a different analytical approach, which is presented in each study. However, the following is meant to provide some additional insights that have not been fully addressed in the papers.

Challenged by the comments from three reviewers to shift my focus from SE to SEOs, I re-analysed the articles after conducting a new search across databases by broadening my search strings to include a wide range of organisations in which SE activities take place. I analysed articles following two main rounds of coding: (1) a descriptive categorisation of articles and (2) the identification of higher order themes using an "open coding" approach (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). In a first step of analysing the data at hand, I was interested in finding out about the structure of the field in general and/or how (dis-)connected research on collaboration in the context of SEOs has been so far. To do this, I first categorised 40 articles based on pre-determined categories: names of authors, publication year, journal title, theoretical perspective, methods and country context. This initial coding was used to develop an Appendix (Table I in paper 1), which provides an overview of the sample. Subsequently, the articles were coded using an "open coding" approach (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) to appraise the central themes around SEOs and collaboration. Key themes were therefore inductively derived from a holistic understanding of each article through an iterative process of reading and re-visiting the selected articles in order to ensure a higher degree of reliability. As a result of this iterative process, I identified five key themes.

Paper 2 adopts a four-stage analytical process with the practice approach as a sensitising frame. Encouraged by the comments from the reviewers, we recoded our empirical material in order to shed light on the minutiae of the resourcing practices. First, "vignettes" were written to capture an initial chronology of the collaboration, identify key activities, events and milestones. We paid attention to what the different actors did, how they performed their activities, communicated their interests,

decisions and agreements and under which circumstances. These timelines, which were subsequently refined as data, were further analysed. Second, using a combination of MAXQDA coding software, handwritten notes and observation guides, we developed an expansive list of mundane and repetitive activity patterns (practices) related to resourcing from the data. We examined all sources of data for everyday activities and the actions undertaken to achieve the desired outcomes. Our aim was to keep as close to the data as possible and resist the temptation to abstract at this stage of analysis. It was at this point that emotion began to emerge as a significant aspect of resourcing when we zoomed out by contrasting the empirical accounts with the existing literature. In line with the principle of "live coding" (Locke et al., 2015), we explored the literature on emotions in the organisational and entrepreneurial context, and particularly the sociology of emotion, and started to search for repeated activity patterns in terms of which *emotions* seemed to be related to and have an influence on achieving a desired outcome. We proceeded inductively, starting by organising activities related to resourcing around their effects and specifically in what they (re)produced. As we mapped the various resourcing practices over time, we further grouped them into three main categories. The final stage of the analysis was to unpack how these categories of practices were carried out towards a pursued aim and how they (re)produced certain outcomes in a specific context. By shifting back and forth between the empirical material and the literature, we aimed to refine the emerging theory. As an outcome of this stage, we organised the empirical material in the Appendix (Table X in paper 2) and revised the paper on this basis.

Paper 3 focuses on the lived experiences of social entrepreneurs when enacting the context for collaboration. My analysis mostly uses the data collected during semi-structured interviews and conversations with social entrepreneurs (founders) and administrative staff, complemented with field notes based on observations and archival data. The rigour of the analysis was increased by coding in the MAXQDA software program. I used an inductive thematic analysis as an analytical tool. Although key themes included the barriers that were encountered in entrepreneuring and

collaboration, political forces influencing the development of SE and public sector's misunderstandings about SE activities during the initial thematic coding, new themes emerged as my data analysis progressed (e.g. participants talked about filling in an important gap, their impact on welfare service delivery and their activities for collaboration). The analysis highlighted the specific nature of their experiences as social entrepreneurs and the interplay between structures and agency. Social theory provided repertoires that were used to develop explanations of social entrepreneurs' accounts of engaging with public authorities. In particular, Michel de Certeau's (1988) practice theory provided me with sensitising concepts. Finally, I grouped second order themes into the three overarching practices used by social entrepreneurs to navigate the public sector setting and "recontextualised" my findings by comparing them with arguments in the extant literature.

In paper 4, to deepen our understanding of the key issues and to detect any underlying social processes we used a coding process related to our research question: What are the embedding processes of a collaborative SIB model in a local context? The analysis was inspired by Gioia et al.'s (2012) methodology. We used an inductive qualitative approach to analyse the data, iterating between our data and the literature as the analysis progressed (Gioia et al., 2012). First, we organised our empirical material (interview transcripts, observational and archival data) around themes that matched our interests. Then, we identified initial concepts in the data and grouped them into categories. In this first-order stage of analysis, we identified 14 categories. During the second phase, we used axial second-order coding and searched for connections that allowed us to convert the categories into 7 higher-order themes. Moving back and forth between the data and the literature, we grounded the constructs that remained close to the data. We coded the themes, for example, "creating a space for experimentation with an SIB model". As part of this process, we identified the important role of bonding and bridging social capital, which inspired us to engage with the social capital and brokering literature. In the final phase, we ordered similar themes into four overarching "aggregate dimensions" that represented conceptually coherent

constructs. As an outcome of this process, we generated the final data structure (Figure A1 in paper 4). Formally, our analysis used the constant comparative method (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018; Glaser, 1978; Jack et al., 2015) of comparing data with data to identify common themes, contrasts and disconfirming items. Our choice of analytical method was largely informed by studies using the constant comparative approach to contexts and entrepreneurial actions (Jack et al., 2015; McKeever et al., 2015). We iteratively compared themes with theories. The analysis was time consuming, essentially trial and error, and continued until we were sure that we had developed a sufficiently convincing account that answered our research question. To improve validity and accuracy, we employed member checks. Based on these discussions, we revised and corrected details and, following the reviewers' comments, showed how the data was used in the analysis in Table A1.

I used several procedures to ensure the internal validity of the findings in three empirical papers. First, as mentioned above, I triangulated between different sources of data throughout the data analysis (Denzin, 1989; Stake, 2005). All the emerging processes and practices discussed in the three empirical papers were evident in the field notes, observation guides, emails and interviews or archival data sources. Second, crafting papers with my co-authors, Elisabet C. Ljunggren and Sarah L. Jack, helped me to "distance" myself from the empirical material, in that they were able to look at the data through "fresh eyes" as they were not involved in the fieldwork. I shared my emergent findings and raw data with both co-authors. In paper 2, the data was jointly and thoroughly re-analysed after the first round of reviews, resulting in monthly discussions and iterations between theory and empirics. I also shared the audio recordings with Elisabet so that she could listen to some of the interactions and the micro-processes that took place during the meetings (elaborated in more detail in the sub-section on Language reflections). I also discussed my own research experiences with Elisabet, thereby forming an introspective record of fieldwork and my personal biases and feelings.

In the process of writing paper 4, I shared the raw data from my field notes, interviews and archival data and emergent patterns with Sarah and demonstrated the logic of analysis by visually showing how I had moved from the raw data to the theoretical labels or constructs to represent that data. I also provided Sarah with information about contextual nuances and how the data was used in the analysis. Throughout this process, Sarah reviewed the emergent patterns, which we then discussed during the meetings. All the empirical puzzles were discussed and resolved through regular conversations.

Furthermore, as showing the data is critical for assessing whether successful theorising is plausible, we showed our data in a smart fashion (Pratt, 2009) when submitting manuscripts to a targeted journal by including appendices with complete and exhaustive tables and figures to illustrate how we had arrived at our conclusions. What I have experienced during the review processes is that ample data allows editors and reviewers to make positive suggestions about how to craft theoretical stories or/and see patterns in data which we had overlooked or underestimated. For example, an *ETP* reviewer pointed to the clear relevance of emotion to our work and encouraged us to explore this aspect more deeply.

The overall writing process was a non-linear, messy process that was continuously interrupted by new theoretical insights and unexpected empirical findings. My co-authors, Elisabet C. Ljunggren and Sarah L. Jack, assisted throughout the writing process by acting as sounding boards and devil's advocates and contributing with helpful editings to frame the research for a targeted journal.

3.5 Methodological reflections

Conducting social research, and particularly qualitative research, requires reflexivity and critical self-scrutiny on the part of the researcher (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018). Many ethical issues and dilemmas arise due to the relationships that are formed between the researcher and the researched, which has been a recurrent concern in

traditional sociological research methods. This means that we as researchers need to reflect on our research process, including our own position as researchers. This involves asking ourselves questions about our own role in and impact on the subsequent research process. As I progressed in my fieldwork, I became more reflective of my own role as a social science researcher.

An attitude of constant reflexivity is indispensable when choosing shadowing as a research method. First, shadowing is characterised by the intensity of contact between the researcher and the participant, which often requires the researcher to spend an extended period of time with the shadowee. It has been argued in the literature that such an extended contact with a particular participant can make the shadower sympathetic to their views and problems and as a result lose their critical view (McDonald, 2005). As such, I had to balance my role as an observer by remaining in the background as much as possible to observe Helena's activities as well as be constantly aware of my role as travel companion when accompanying Helena on her business trips.

The shadowing process involved a lot of interaction, as Helena tried to make me feel comfortable in her world. We often engaged in informal conversations. For example, she told me vivid stories related to her life as a social entrepreneur, asked me if I knew any SE conferences that she might attend or which social ventures I had been in contact with; and reflected that I might uncover some intriguing things she was not aware of. Putting on my researcher hat and remaining distant while sitting with her on public transport, for example, may have affected our rapport and been awkward. It was therefore necessary and natural to engage in lively dialogues from time to time. In some cases, Helena told me that she had to prepare something important for a meeting, which signalled that she needed time to herself. This allowed me to observe what she did and clarify when she had completed her task. Thus, I needed to be self-aware and reflexive, but also sympathetically and fully engaged in the process of understanding the world of social entrepreneuring. Engaging in lively dialogues was important for

building rapport, but I did not aim to become friends with Helena and was not intrusive by imposing questions or disturbing her. Instead, I tried to observe her doings from a distance to make it easier to 'keep the activities and conversations directed toward the practices of interest' (Johnson, 2014). There was therefore a constant positioning. As such, I found that I could manage the close relationship that developed with Helena over time, while at the same time not compromising my integrity or my identity as a researcher.

Shadowing was sometimes an emotional experience, in particular, during the critical incident that jeopardised the collaboration process with Fjord, as reported on earlier. It was then impossible to remain stony-faced in such a situation. As a human being, I showed my empathy and expressed my support to Helena, even though she acted professionally in that situation. Hence, complete neutrality was not an option and, in my opinion, is an illusion. We are all human beings who have feelings and emotions. I tried to stay as neutral as I could and careful not to show any emotion, although I do remember feeling sad while walking from the Fjord premises with Helena. Staying neutral was not an easy task – I felt sympathetic to the situation and this also affected the future of my PhD project, in particular my ability to follow the unfolding of the collaboration. Therefore, I constantly needed to adapt to different situations and contexts and act in accordance with the circumstances.

Although I clearly identified myself as a PhD student affiliated to Nord University doing research on SE, Helena was also aware of the fact that I had some knowledge about SE from an international perspective. I had an extended professional experience of international projects related to Corporate Social Responsibility, and had written my master's thesis on social innovation in a Russian context. As such, for Helena I may therefore have embodied two roles: one as a PhD student and another as a professional. However, during the shadowing process I did not encounter any situations in which my role as a researcher was compromised. Neither did I experience any situations in which Helena asked me to help her with something in her daily

activities. Previous studies have shown that shadowees tend to assign particular roles to the people who shadow them (Gill, 2011). In my case, Helena presented me to others as a PhD student in social entrepreneurship from Nord University who used Betz as a case in the doctoral thesis. I also tried to be transparent to everyone I met by telling them who I was and what I was doing. When participating in the meetings between the case ventures and municipalities, my role was solely as an observer. In both cases I was introduced as "a fly on the wall" and was not involved in any of the discussions.

In addition, it was crucial to reflect on my position as a foreign PhD student of Russian origin who had lived in Norway for five years. Reflecting on my role, I felt I was an "outsider with insights" (Olsen, 2020). In particular, I came to realise that my non-Norwegianess seemed to be an asset and tried to emphasise my outsiderness as a foreign researcher in the initial interviews. This proved advantageous in a way, because during the interviews my respondents spent extra time explaining the contextual nuances to me, such as the Norwegian welfare state, current political trends and a "move amongst municipalities", which would probably not have been the case for a Norwegian PhD student. For example, the managing director of Anders Capital, who had an extensive background in politics, shared her reflections with me about the backstage of politics – "how things related to social innovation are done there". The managing director also shared some of the nuances around the SIB model and negotiations that were not touched on in interviews with the founders of Nature Magic or the municipal employees from Rock municipality. Social entrepreneur Helena also seemed to be very open in the interviews, bringing up topics like her pension agreement and her plans to "have a business affair from it", which can be considered quite personal, especially in the context of *social* entrepreneuring.

3.6 Language reflections

In this qualitative study the data was collected in more than one language, in particular in both English and Norwegian, neither of which is my native tongue (I'm a native Russian speaker), which meant that at various points in my research I had to deal with language issues (Temple & Young, 2004). As mentioned above, the interviews were conducted in both English and Norwegian, depending on the respondents' preferences, in order to obtain depth and detail in the qualitative interviews, avoid "lost in translation" issues and ensure accurate meaning was captured during the data collection. The social entrepreneurs and administrative employees in both social ventures and the managing director of the social venture company all felt comfortable about speaking English, while representatives of the Fjord and Rock municipalities preferred being interviewed in Norwegian. All the meetings that I observed were held only in Norwegian.

Although I did not encounter any challenges in collecting data in English, I did have to deal with some language issues whilst interviewing and observing meetings held in Norwegian, in particular those relating to Fjord municipality. I therefore had to take into account my Norwegian language competence, given that Norway has numerous local dialects and regional linguistic variations in terms of pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. This poses challenges for non-native Norwegian speakers (sometimes also for native speakers). In my case, the representatives of the Fjord and Rock municipalities spoke very different dialects, which took me some time to adapt to. The choice made during my data collection to record the interviews (both on video and tape) and meetings and gaining consent for this turned out to be very helpful in the subsequent stages of the data analysis and interpretation of the results, in that I was able to (re)listen to the recordings and ask my co-author or colleagues who were native Norwegian speakers for clarification of diverse minor issues. In addition, I was able to ask social entrepreneur Helena for clarification after the meetings if I was unsure about what had been said.

Working in teams to conduct qualitative research can increase rigour in the analysis and encourage richer interpretation (Barry et al., 1999). As such, another important consideration was to co-write paper 2 with Prof. Elisabet C. Ljunggren, a native Norwegian speaker, familiar with the intricacies of the contextual issues and having a detailed understanding of the study context, including the cultural nuances. Paper 2 was significantly shaped by three reviewers during the review process who urged us to get into 'the meat of the case and really in-depth' in our re-analysis of the data. As a result, we were encouraged to get into the "nitty-gritty" work of social entrepreneuring – all the meetings, the talking etc. (Thompson et al., 2020). Thus, co-authorship was considered advantageous for analysing and scrutinising the micro-processes that took place during the meetings between Helena and Fjord employees, which were held in Norwegian (with Fjord employees speaking their strong dialect) and tape-recorded. Elisabet took responsibility for transcribing the meetings in Norwegian held between Fjord employees and Helena and translating them into English for further analysis. Furthermore, this research collaboration – with one researcher "inside" the empirical field and the other "outside" – enhanced the analytical process. As Berglund and Schwartz (2013, p.9) note, 'this acts as a second shadowing process, in which the "outside" researcher becomes another observer revealing the blind spots in the "inside researcher's" observations'.

Paper 4 is co-authored with Prof. Sarah L. Jack, a native English speaker. Here I was the person who spoke and understood the language of the participants, i.e. Norwegian, in our team. While the data from the social entrepreneurs from Nature Magic and the managing director of the social investor company was in English, the data from the interviews with the representatives from Rock municipality and the observed meetings was in Norwegian. The decision was made to translate those parts of the data from Norwegian into English for coding so that Sarah could participate in the analysis. In particular, I reserved translation into English only for significant themes and phrases, where my task was to convey the original meaning as much as possible. As such, the coding took place in the language of the participants, i.e. Norwegian, where only the

relevant parts were translated into English. The translations were as close to verbatim as possible. Further, during our meetings I provided Sarah with the contextual nuances related to the collaborative Social Impact Bond model under investigation. Thus, I was responsible for validating the translation of the data from Norwegian into English.

Reflecting on the above, I think it was beneficial that two of the empirical papers were collaboratively co-created and that the language issues related to dialects and regional linguistical variations did not constitute limitations to the study, but were instead addressed.

3.7 Ethical considerations

3.7.1 Information, consent and anonymity

In terms of ethical considerations, this was an important aspect of the empirical studies. Several ethical issues were considered for this study. As a first step towards ethically sound research, the PhD project was reported to and approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). The application included a thorough description of the project, an information letter for the participants, a consent form, interview guides with preliminary questions and an observation guide. The NSD approval is attached in Appendix A.

Contacting participants from the two case social ventures, the municipalities involved in the collaboration process and the social investor company entailed emailing them to request their participation in the project. Attached to the email was an information letter about the project, the research purpose and the data management. After receiving positive feedback, I explained the research project more thoroughly during the initial meetings and interviews. It was also necessary to obtain voluntary, explicit and informed consent from the participants that clarified what their participation involved and that they could withdraw their consent at any time without giving a reason. A consent was signed by each participant and returned to me, either in person or by email as an attached document.

Another important ethical aspect was that I asked permission to take notes and tape-record the face-to-face interviews, the digital video interviews on Microsoft Teams and meetings between the case social ventures and municipalities where possible. All the participants agreed to the video(recording) of interviews and meetings.

All the participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity in the processing of their personal data in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act) and the reporting of the results. Although some participants agreed to be disclosed by name, position and the organisation they were employed in, all the data was subject to the anonymisation and pseudonymisation process. So as not to not jeopardise privacy and anonymity, the exact name of the case social ventures, the municipalities and their geographical locations and the activities of social ventures were anonymised. The names of participants were changed and pseudonyms used. However, as the identification of the case venture Betz was made by contacting colleagues with professional connections with the social entrepreneur and founder of Betz, they and my co-authors Elisabet C. Ljunggren and Sarah L. Jack are aware of the respondents' names, the activities of both social ventures, their locations and the names of the municipalities.

3.7.2 Access to email correspondence and documents

In the case of Betz, as my working relationship with social entrepreneur Helena matured, she provided me with the opportunity to access real-time emails and internal documentation. I was copied into the email exchanges (using the 'cc' function) between Helena and the Fjord municipality employees involved in the collaboration process, thereby enabling a continuous update of what was happening. Thus, I was frequently exposed to sensitive information, much of which was internal to the organisation. For example, some emails included attached internal documentation, such as reports, the collaboration agreement, financial documents and other project-related documents containing sensitive business information. Helena was willing to share emails and internal documents with me for research purposes, but explicitly told

me that certain information was confidential and business sensitive and was not to be shared. This was an important issue to be considered. To ensure privacy and confidentiality, I only used my university-issued or approved email account and transferred all the emails and attached documents to the qualitative analytical tool MAXQDA. Original emails and documents were deleted from my university mailbox and stored in a MAXQDA computerised folder with password protection on my university's personal computer.

CHAPTER 4. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH PAPERS: OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY

This chapter presents the four research papers included in the thesis and summarises the research findings. A brief overview is presented of each article, its theoretical and methodological orientation, the main findings and its contribution to the dissertation. Taken together, the papers provide a multifaceted answer to the overall research question addressed in the study.

PAPER 1. Social entrepreneurship organisations and collaboration: taking stock and looking forward

Study 1 is a single-authored paper and is published in the *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior and Research*.

Paper 1 provides an SLR of the current state of research on collaboration in the context of SEOs at the interorganisational level. The paper extends its focus to SEOs referred to as organisations that engage in SE by adopting entrepreneurial and/or innovative behaviour to achieve the public benefit intention (Kimmitt & Muñoz, 2018; Lewis *et al*., 2021). SEO serves as an umbrella term for social ventures, social enterprises, community enterprises, cooperatives and social businesses (see Douglas et al., 2018 for a review). Despite the blurred boundaries, each of these SEO forms has some distinguishing features that may vary in different contexts.

The role of collaboration in the context of SEOs has mushroomed recently in academic research and political and business practice (Barinaga, 2020; Bojica et al., 2018; de Bruin et al., 2017). However, this area of research spans different fields of study, contexts, theoretical perspectives and multiple units of analysis, thereby leading to a fragmentation that requires systematisation and categorisation. With this backdrop, the objective of this paper is to map the interdisciplinary literature on SEO collaboration, use the analysis to appraise the key research themes and develop a

future research agenda. Accordingly, the paper poses three research questions: 1) What is the state-of-the-art of the research on collaboration in the context of SEOs? 2) What are the emerging themes of interest for SEO research? and 3) What are the implications for future research suggested by the findings?

The conceptual study systematically reviews and synthesises 40 peer-reviewed articles published in ranked journals as per the Chartered Association of Business Schools Journal Guide 2021 (ABS) listed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases. The SLR maps the progress of the field over the period 2005-2021, discusses the general trends, various theories, conceptual perspectives, research contexts and methodological trends. Further, it gives some structure to the fragmented literature and indicates potential research avenues by providing relevant research questions to be explored.

The findings suggest that collaboration is increasingly perceived as a crucial entrepreneurial activity and resourcing practice for SEOs. Although SEO collaboration has been researched from diverse theoretical perspectives, the SLR reveals that institutional theory and RBV remain the most commonly used theories for studying the nature of collaboration in the context of SEOs. Further, this area of research remains overwhelmingly dominated by studies examining SEO collaboration in the UK context. The next contribution lies in identifying the dominant areas of scholarly interest in the study of collaboration in the context of SEOs. These areas are classified into five research themes: 1) motivations and strategies of collaboration, 2) its antecedents, 3) the interplay of institutional logics and tensions arising in collaboration, 4) the impact of collaboration on the mission of SEOs and 5) collaborative processes and practices. The study also reveals a strong dominance of studies building on the fields of interorganisational collaboration, such as cross-sector partnerships and social alliances, including SEOs, with a limited number of studies exploring different aspects of SEO collaboration from the perspective of the (social) entrepreneurship literature.

In terms of the main RQ of the thesis, paper 1 offers a conceptual grounding by synthesising state-of-the-art research on collaboration in the context of SEOs. It reveals

that there has been little focus on entrepreneurial processes and practices for collaboration, thereby identifying research gaps and providing suggestions for future research that are then taken up by the subsequent three empirical papers. Further, paper 1 contributes to answering the main RQ by offering a potential theoretical grounding for studying entrepreneurial processes and practices for collaboration. In particular, it suggests that an EaP approach has the potential to for generate new theoretical insights and practical applications.

PAPER 2. Everyday heroes and everyday chores: How social entrepreneurs do resourcing through collaboration

Empirical paper 2 is co-authored with Prof. Elisabet C. Ljunggren from Nord University and is in a 3rd round of reviews with *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* (after a major revision). I was solely responsible for the conceptualisation and framing of the paper, conducting the fieldwork and constructing empirical material for the study and positioning the study in EaP research, while the analysis of the empirical material was a collaborative effort, as was writing the rest of the paper after the revisions.

This study seeks to revisit the theorising on entrepreneurial resourcing through collaboration by turning to practice theory, in particular taking an EaP as our theoretical lens. The aim of the study is to unpack the resourcing practices pursued by a social entrepreneur in the context of a critical incident in collaboration with a public sector organisation – a municipality in our case. In doing so, we shift the focus to the mundane activities through which social entrepreneurs enact resources when collaborating, thereby focusing on the "nitty-gritty" work of (social) entrepreneuring. Accordingly, we set out to answer the following research questions: *How do social entrepreneurs resource social ventures through public collaboration? What resourcing practices do they employ when responding to a critical incident jeopardising the collaboration?*

To that end, we employed a longitudinal ethnographic case study approach to examine the case of social venture Betz, run by social entrepreneur Helena and draw on real-time, naturally occurring data, as called for by Johannisson (2011) and Chalmers and Shaw (2017). The paper makes use of the richest empirical material conducted for this PhD study. Our case is informed by the collection of qualitative data from multiple sources: shadowing, observation, real-time email correspondence, interviews, informal conversations and documents. By adopting a single case design and following the case over time and in real time, we were able to immerse ourselves in the concrete doings and practices of entrepreneuring (Johannisson, 2018) and gain detailed insights into the entrepreneurial activities conducted over time while resourcing Betz and responding to a critical incident.

Conceptually, we draw on previous work on resourcing (Feldman & Worline, 2011) and the work of Keating et al. (2014), who argue that 'resources emerge as they are engaged with, in real time and over time, and as a consequence of and impetus to entrepreneurs' ongoing resourcing efforts'. Theoretically, we use an EaP approach (Champenois et al., 2020; Gartner & Teague, 2020) and rely on notions of Schatzki's practice theory (Schatzki, 2005, 2012) to help us understand our emerging findings. According to Schatzki, a practice is 'an open-ended, spatially and temporally dispersed nexus of *doings and sayings*' (Schatzki, 2012, p.13). This concept of practice enables us to see the performance of a practice in the doings and sayings of an entrepreneur, which in turn sustains the practice as a nexus of doings and sayings (Kimmitt & Dimov, 2020).

By studying this case from an EaP lens we were able to obtain a close and authentic account of the resourcing practices, thereby expanding our understanding of the everyday, situated and dynamic nature of entrepreneuring and entrepreneurial resourcing (Champenois et al., 2020; Gartner & Teague, 2020; Keating et al., 2014). In particular, our study gained nuanced insights into the complexity of entrepreneurial resourcing through collaboration by unpacking the black box of this process. We did

this by scrutinising entrepreneurial resourcing practices. We uncovered three categories of intertwined resourcing practices that help to accomplish resourcing through collaboration: practices (re)producing strong ties, (re)producing narratives and (re)producing emotional bonds. By documenting these practices, our study sheds light on the in-depth activities underlying the accomplishment of resourcing through collaboration and how these activities actuate and (re)produce structural concepts such as strong ties, narratives and emotional bonds. We also demonstrated that these practices do not work in isolation but represent a practice mesh (Schatzki, 2005) sometimes having a cumulative effect.

Importantly, the paper exposes a largely concealed element of entrepreneurial resourcing practice. Our findings point to the powerful role of emotion as part of the entrepreneurial resourcing repertoire. Drawing on the sociology of emotion literature (Hochschild, 1983), we reveal that enacting different emotion management practices serves as a powerful tool in entrepreneurs' resourcing efforts and opens up a plethora of possibilities and new resources. By adopting a EaP lens to study the resourcing of social ventures through collaboration, our case study shows that emotion is not only a resource but also an important entrepreneurial resourcing practice. Additionally, our findings challenge the individual centric approach to emotions and notions of heroic entrepreneurship and instead adopts an interpersonal approach that involves the individuals an entrepreneur interacts with.

PAPER 3. Playing around with the "rules of the game": social entrepreneurs navigating the public sector terrain in pursuit of collaboration

Study 3 has been accepted for publication as a book chapter in the forthcoming '*Rethinking the Social in Innovation and Entrepreneurship*' (Edward Elgar Publishing) and is a single-authored paper. The chapter is in a production phase and has not yet undergone language editing and proofreading.

This paper scrutinises the micro-practices and activities through which social entrepreneurs enact the public collaboration context, in particular with municipalities. In this study, I seek to provide a better understanding of the lived experiences of social entrepreneurs when engaging with municipalities to enact the context for public collaboration in a Norwegian welfare state. Accordingly, I focus on the entrepreneurial activities, or "entrepreneuring", in their societal and institutional contexts (Johannisson, 2011; Steyaert, 2007; Watson, 2013) and pose the following research question: *How do social entrepreneurs employ different practices to navigate the complex public welfare setting to bring about public collaboration and facilitate social venturing?*

Two cases act as vehicles to highlight social entrepreneurs' experiences and interpretations of how they engage in public collaboration. In this paper, interviews with social entrepreneurs - founders and administrative staff of both cases - and observations from meetings serve as a main data sources. Theoretically, I interpret the data via the lens of Michel de Certeau's practice theory (de Certeau, 1988). By mobilising the notions of strategy and tactics in de Certeau's practice theory, this study contributes to theorising practices as tactics to better understand how social entrepreneurs deal with settings featured by dominant orders.

Although social entrepreneurs are expected to follow the "rules of the game" in their quest for collaboration, they artfully play around with these structures to actualise new practices. More particularly, the two cases analysed in this paper demonstrate that in contexts such as Norway, social entrepreneurs use various tactics to pave the way for potential collaborations, although successful navigation in the public setting is influenced by the political forces representing Norwegian municipalities (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009). I show that social entrepreneurs draw on ''system knowledge'' to dynamically articulate the hybridity of their social ventures to show that they differ from for-profit companies and build credibility by pinpointing their consistent,

systematic and moral image, which can be considered as part of their impression management practices.

As the findings suggest, whether social entrepreneurs can gain acceptance and engage in collaboration is shaped by aspects beyond their reach, such as the dominant position of the Norwegian welfare state, regulatory pressures in the municipal sector and political forces. However, the study shows that social entrepreneurs do not take the "rules of the game" for granted and draw on various tactics to constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into opportunities. In this way, the manoeuvring of social entrepreneurs can be interpreted as a tactical movement towards collaboration following the "rules of the game" and that social entrepreneuring appears to be 'an everyday tactic on the public scene' (Steyaert & Katz, 2004, p.192). Overall, the two cases provide good examples of social entrepreneurs' experiences of engaging with constant institutional constraints, through which they learn how to "navigate" the public setting, introduce new ideas and build credibility, while reshaping the context to accommodate their entrepreneurial practices through public collaboration.

PAPER 4. Alternative investing as brokering: The embedding process of a Social Impact Bond model in a local context

Empirical paper 4 is co-authored with Prof. Sarah L. Jack from Stockholm School of Economics, which is published in *Journal of Business Venturing Insights* after major revisions. The paper has been submitted to a special issue "Alternative investment and entrepreneurship: Powering the social economy" and I am the paper's lead author. My own responsibility was to answer to the call for papers, the methodology, the investigation and most of the composition of the paper, while the revision was a collaborative effort. Sarah contributed to the writing and editing of both the original and revised drafts.

Responding to the call for papers, this study takes a slightly different focus by shifting attention to the role of alternative investing and investment instruments in social

venturing and enacting public collaboration, thereby highlighting the importance of *others* in the "doing" of social entrepreneuring. Recent research has documented the importance of relational processes for social venturing that introduce social ventures to diverse stakeholders, such as investors, direct beneficiaries, community members, collaborators, policymakers and customers, representing different domains and interests (Drencheva et al., 2021; Stephan et al., 2016). Hence, considering the importance of others' input and insights in social venturing, in this paper we show the role of social investors in enacting social venture-public collaborations by embedding an innovative collaborative form such as SIB into a local context.

In this paper, we conduct a longitudinal case study of the social venture Nature Magic funded through the SIB model to unpack the embedding processes of a collaborative SIB model in a local context. In doing so, we explore the activities involved in embedding the SIB model in a local context over time. Thereby, our aim is to understand SIBs by bringing an entrepreneurship lens to bear on the unfolding of these embedding processes. Conceptually, we build on social capital as a crucial aspect of networks and embedding, in particular the bridging and bonding forms of social capital (Agnitsch et al., 2006; Anderson & Jack, 2002; Putnam, 2000). Conceived in an entrepreneurial context, social capital is a social resource that facilitates connections (Anderson et al., 2012; James et al., 2021).

This paper provides a longitudinal and contextually situated account of the embedding process of the SIB model into a local context. We show that the SIB model is embedded through three processes by which the key actors created a context-sensitive hybrid SIB model going beyond the traditional premises of SIB models: 1) cultivating opportunity, 2) pulling together and 3) fostering experimentation and ''mutation''. We theorise the embedding processes as being fostered by developing and activating bonding social capital, which is crucial for the success of a collaboration and the bridging element of social capital (Jack & Anderson, 2002).

Furthermore, our work provides a deeper understanding of the role that social investors can play in helping social ventures to enact public collaboration. Our findings suggest that the social investor leverages a brokerage and bridging role by fostering relationships and facilitating collaborations between social ventures and municipalities by embedding the SIB model. Hence, our study extends the current understanding of alternative investing by viewing it as brokering, thereby providing a greater nuance to what social investors do in SIBs.

CHAPTER 5. THE INTEGRATED DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

The overall aim of the thesis is to enhance our understanding of how social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing their social ventures and enabling public services to change. In this section, I summarise and discuss the main findings and takeaways from all the appended empirical papers in relation to the primary research question: *Through which processes and practices do social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration?* This was explored through three sub-questions revolving around: the resourcing practices through collaboration (paper 2), social entrepreneurs' navigation of the complex public welfare setting (paper 3) and the embedding processes of a collaborative SIB model (paper 4). Based on this discussion, I subsequently draw the main conclusions and discuss the overall theoretical and methodological contributions of the thesis. The practical and policy implications follow, and the thesis ends with limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

5.1 Synthesis and discussion of findings

The starting point for the PhD project, as well as for paper 1, was to gain a better understanding of what we know about the interplay of SEOs, including social ventures and collaboration, in order to identify future research opportunities. This small but growing body of literature has provided us with important insights into the role of collaboration in social venturing: resourcing, social venture development and increased social impact (de Bruin et al., 2017; Di Domenico et al., 2009; Diochon & Anderson, 2011; Renko, 2013). However, apart from notable exceptions (Barinaga, 2017; Pret & Carter, 2017), the literature has been surprisingly silent on what social entrepreneurs *do* to enact collaboration and, importantly, what processes and practices they engage in to resource their ventures and enable public services to change, for instance, in the context of public collaboration. While much of the

literature assumes that collaboration can be challenging and might result in tensions and mission drifts (Barinaga, 2020; Gillett et al., 2019; Kwong et al., 2017), there is a clear gap in the existing literature regarding how social entrepreneurs navigate challenges, analyse context and overcome social and institutional constraints on entrepreneurial behaviour in a collaborative setting. In view of this, exploring entrepreneurial processes and practices for collaboration is important. Accordingly, building on the premise that "what entrepreneurs do" in their local context (Anderson & Ronteau, 2017; Gartner & Teague, 2020) is an important aspect of entrepreneurship studies, the thesis addresses this gap by drawing attention to the "doing" of social entrepreneuring and investigating the processes and practices to enact public collaboration in the subsequent three empirical papers. In particular, my main interest is to understand how social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing their social ventures and enabling public services to change.

Previous research has acknowledged the importance of "considerable prior investments in the relationships", such as building personal trust and engaging in activities that signal a long-term commitment to the relationship for collaboration (Weber et al., 2017). Furthermore, prior studies have revealed that the collaborations that social entrepreneurs tap into appear to be dependent on the *individuals* managing the collaboration. Many social venture collaborations are actually based on the relationship or level of trust between individuals at different entities, rather than on the established relationships between the organisations themselves (Gillett et al., 2019; Meyskens et al., 2010). Others have argued that social entrepreneurs actively create conditions of *mutual dependence* with external parties through 'the progressive reciprocal embedding of partners that occurs through repeated interactions which shifts the power relations' (McNamara et al., 2018, p. 493). However, what social entrepreneurs actually *do* to enact collaboration remains a "black box". In fact, as papers 1 and 2 show, collaboration in social venturing is often explored through the lens of institutional theory, research-based view (RBV) and resource dependence theory. Research on the collaboration of social ventures with organisations adopting

RBV theory or resource dependence theory (Kwong et al., 2017; McNamara et al., 2018) rarely observes collaboration as it unfolds in real time, which makes capturing the dynamics and theorising actual entrepreneurial doings and interactions difficult. A fuller appreciation of entrepreneurial processes and practices requires encounters with entrepreneur's engagements (Gaddefors & Anderson, 2018). As such, these theories appear to limit the unpacking of the black box of the actual entrepreneurial doings for collaboration and how collaborations unfold and are experienced in *real-time* (de Bruin et al., 2017; Johannisson, 2018). In view of this, I believe that these theories are limited in their explanatory scope, in that they do not allow us to fully appreciate the richness and diversity of the "doing" of social entrepreneuring for collaboration and recognise social entrepreneuring as socially situated and socially enacted (Dodd et al., 2021; James et al., 2021). As such, the thesis provides a more nuanced view of how social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing their social ventures and enabling public services to change. The findings of the empirical papers appended to this thesis deepen and broaden this literature in various ways.

First, very few studies in the SE literature have explored how social entrepreneurs accomplish entrepreneurial "doing" (processes and practices) for collaboration at the micro-level (Barinaga, 2017; Pret & Carter, 2017). The findings of the appended papers demonstrate the importance of qualified, genuine and long-lasting relations featuring friendship ties (a phrasing which tends to suggest strong ties), which take a long time to establish (Johannisson, 2018), as suggested in papers 2 and 4. The thesis furthers our understanding of how social entrepreneurs weave new relations into collaboration by employing specific practices and processes. For example, taking an EaP as our theoretical lens in paper 2 allowed to show how social entrepreneur Helena went beyond the bureaucratic/organisational logics of Fjord municipality and cared less about the limitations of the social venture or the municipality by employing practices such as *engaging* and *sharing* over time, thereby mobilising an entrepreneurial social asset (James et al., 2021) and (re)producing strong ties (Anderson et al., 2010; Jack,

2005). There, the practice of engaging others and *with* others was often about developing interdependence and a feeling of being "in the same boat", while the practice of sharing strengthened the bonds/relations between the partners and triggered a feeling of being "partners in crime". We have shown how social entrepreneur Helena turned an initially serendipitous encounter into meaningful connections and mobilised this as an important resource (James et al., 2021) to achieve the desired outcome – the continuation of the collaboration. Thus, Helena enacted social resources in dynamic, relational and context-specific practices to accomplish her objectives, since resources are created and recreated through action (Feldman, 2004). Furthermore, the thesis reveals the importance of practices that reproduce emotional bonds by helping to enact collaboration and accomplish resourcing, as detailed in paper 2. We have demonstrated that Helena felt deeply and emotionally about the whole collaborative process as a social entrepreneur with deep conviction and commitment and engaged in *emotional management practices* and the practice of *caring*. Accordingly, by looking at practices, I have demonstrated how entrepreneurial agency forges and works strong ties and emotional bonds, both of which are nurtured through entrepreneurial practices.

In similar vein, the empirical findings in paper 4 suggest that social resourcing is important for embedding a SIB model in a local context. We saw that the embedding processes were fostered by developing and activating bonding social capital. In particular, the process of *pulling together* (paper 4) played a crucial role in enacting collaboration through the SIB model and permeated the entire collaboration process. Bonding social capital seemed to be enabled and developed by accumulating knowledge about each other and by creating space for an appreciation of and curiosity about each other (Anderson & Jack, 2002; James et al., 2021). Yet, the mutuality of shared values and interests also formed the bonding social capital and fostered a sense of togetherness, which became the critical resource for the collaboration. In turn, this produced group social responsibility, interdependence and a socialised obligation to help each other to achieve a common goal. Although the findings provide empirical

support for the argument that pre-existing relationships and shared values play an important role in collaboration (Gillett et al., 2019; McDermott et al., 2018), mutual sympathy based on shared values is not enough in itself and per se does not automatically translate into concrete outcomes (Johannisson, 2018), but requires further activities in that (social) entrepreneuring involves connecting to others (Anderson et al., 2012; Diochon & Anderson, 2011). The thesis demonstrates that building credibility is a common practice that is pursued by social entrepreneurs to gain acceptance and positive perceptions about the social venture and its mission (paper 3) and that they do this by presenting a consistent, systematic and moral image to signal their potential social value attributes, venture viability and member commitment. Based on longitudinal observations of entrepreneurial activities, the thesis demonstrates that this is accomplished by a range of practices, such as *collaborative communicative practices* and *narrating*, as shown in paper 2 (Feldman & Worline, 2011). Thus, the thesis brings to light a richer and deeper understanding of the processes and practices through which social entrepreneurs connect to others in a collaborative setting.

Second, in recent years there has been a dramatic increase in the scale of alternative investing. Despite this increase, academic research has lagged well behind practice (Wry & Haugh, 2018). In previous research, little attention has been paid to the role of alternative investing and investment instruments like SIBs in social entrepreneuring and when enacting public collaboration (Muñoz & Kimmitt, 2019). The thesis provides nuances that enhance our understanding of the role of alternative investing in social entrepreneuring, thereby highlighting the importance of *others* in the "doing" of social entrepreneuring (Branzei et al., 2018). In particular, the thesis points to the important role of social investors for enacting public collaboration and facilitating social venturing, as suggested in papers 3 and 4. Perhaps surprisingly, in contrast to previous literature (Neyland, 2019; Williams, 2018) that generally portrays investors rather negatively due to profiteering, monetising outcomes etc., the findings suggest that social investors engage in entrepreneurial supporting practices (Champenois et al., 2020). An example

of this is *brokering*, as in connecting social venture and Rock municipality by embedding a novel collaborative SIB model in a local context, which is not usual for such models (Andersen et al., 2020). The practice of brokering also relates to the activities involved, such as the set-up process by inviting the specialised company to draw up a detailed SIB contract and form a ''steering group'' and ''working group''. Furthermore, during the collaboration process the social investor underlined the importance of recruiting more teachers from the municipality to sustain the services, facilitating discussions about how to design questionnaires so that young people could respond to them and checking the experiences of teachers in training. In doing so, the social investor became intrinsically committed to making the venture and the municipality's concerns their own, what Johannisson (2018) calls "dynamic involvement". Accordingly, the case of Nature Magic highlights the significance of bridging organisations that bring together, connect and translate between practice nets in enacting collaboration (Keating et al., 2014) — like the social investor company did between Nature Magic and Rock municipality in the embedding processes of the SIB model.

Similarly, approaching entrepreneurial "doing" from the practice ontology draws attention to the relational dynamics of entrepreneurial activities and practices and stresses the importance of mutual interpersonal relationships and surroundings in an entrepreneur's immediate practice, as shown in paper 2. The practice lens allows us to understand how things unfold over time through people's interactions. In paper 2 we underline the processual and relational nature of resourcing practices. For example, emotion management practices and caring can be considered as forms of relational practices that connect others at an emotional level. Hence, the thesis challenges the individualised discourses of entrepreneurship (Dodd & Anderson, 2007; Johannisson, 2011, 2018) by emphasising the importance of others in social entrepreneuring. The findings also highlight the collective dimension of social entrepreneuring since creating impact is a collective endeavour (Branzei et al., 2018; Johannisson, 2018).

Lastly, the thesis contributes to the SE literature by examining social entrepreneuring in a new context. As paper 1 reveals, research on collaboration in the context of SEOs remains overwhelmingly dominated by empirical studies from the UK. As outlined in the introductory chapter, given the importance of context in shaping and being shaped by entrepreneurial practices, our understanding of entrepreneurship cannot be separated from the contexts and social structures in which entrepreneurs are embedded (McKeever et al., 2014; Welter, 2011). Accordingly, it is important to situate the entrepreneurial activities in the context in which they take place (Van Burg et al., 2020; Welter & Baker, 2020). Globally and locally, social entrepreneurs operate according to local rules, resources and social systems. As suggested in the introductory part of the thesis, SE and social ventures are still in a pre-paradigmatic state in a Norwegian context and academics have played a minor role in exploring social entrepreneuring in this particular context (Hauge, 2017; Vannebo & Grande, 2018), which means that the present study is timely. Hence, the thesis also advances scholarly work on social entrepreneuring in a new context by demonstrating the embedding processes of a SIB model into local context, thus diverging from previous research, which focused on empirical cases from the UK and USA (paper 4). Additionally, paper 3 demonstrates how social entrepreneurs navigate the public welfare setting in a Norwegian context with a well-developed welfare system when seeking out new opportunities for public collaboration.

5.2 Theoretical and methodological implications

In this sub-section I describe the theoretical and methodological contributions of the thesis. As highlighted in the introductory chapter, collaboration is a critical and common social entrepreneurial activity and resourcing practice (de Bruin et al, 2017; McNamara et al., 2018), regardless of whether social entrepreneurs work in hostile contexts marked by a scarcity of resources or in more generous and resourceful ones.

The thesis contributes to the general entrepreneurship literature, and in particular to the literature on entrepreneurial resourcing in the context of social venturing by

scrutinising the mundane activities through which social entrepreneurs enact resources through collaboration (paper 2). As highlighted in papers 1 and 2, much of the prior research on the topic is based on RBV and resource dependency theory and focuses on the role of resource providers, for example by exploring why resource providers engage in collaborations with social ventures and which types of resources are exchanged (e.g. Bacq & Eddleston, 2016; Desa & Basu, 2013; Kwong et al., 2017; McNamara et al., 2018; Meyskens et al., 2010). As outlined in paper 2, these research perspectives provide a static conceptualisation of the resources that are "out there", waiting to be identified and acquired by entrepreneurs over time, without explaining how resources gain their value (Keating et al., 2014) and are valuable due to the innate qualities contained within them. Accordingly, this line of research implicitly adopts what Desa and Basu (2013, p. 28) refer to as an optimisation approach, where 'firms have a clear idea of the goals they want to accomplish and know the quality of the resources they need to achieve these goals'. However, viewing resources through the lens of practice theory (the resourcing perspective) suggests that the value of a resource arises from its meaning in interrelated practices (Feldman, 2004; Giddens, 1984). Hence, with this thesis I offer a detailed account of the resourcing practices through the activities of social entrepreneurs and show that the reality is more complex than that portrayed in previous research, which follows lines of reasoning from RBV and resource dependency theory. Most importantly, although I focus on *social* entrepreneuring, the thesis contributes to the general entrepreneurship literature, and in particular the literature on entrepreneurial resourcing and emerging EaP research. I believe that we make a modest contribution to theory in paper 2 by theorising a powerful role of emotions in an entrepreneurial resourcing practice and finding that emotions are deeply intertwined with what entrepreneurs do. We argue that emotion is an important yet concealed entrepreneurial resourcing practice in the sense that emotions can do entrepreneurial resourcing. Furthermore, the findings in paper 2 challenge the individual centric approach to the emotions and notions of heroic entrepreneurs, and instead point to the need to adopt an *interpersonal* approach that

involves individuals with whom the entrepreneur interacts when studying emotions as part of a resourcing repertoire.

Accordingly, the thesis contributes to a revitalised view of entrepreneurial resourcing through collaboration by offering a fresh perspective on the microfoundations of the resourcing process that rest on the nuances of practice theory. Adopting an EaP theoretical lens, the findings in paper 2 extend our understanding of the everyday, situated and dynamic nature of social entrepreneuring and entrepreneurial resourcing (Champenois et al., 2020; Gartner & Teague, 2020; Keating et al., 2014). Hence, the thesis contributes to our understanding of entrepreneurial resourcing as both a socially situated and a truly social endeavour, which demonstrates the prominence of *practices, social contexts* and *interactions* for resourcing through collaboration.

The thesis also makes a methodological contribution to the entrepreneurship literature, in particular to the literature examining collaboration in social venturing. As elaborated on in chapter 3, I combined diverse ethnographic practices, such as shadowing, observations and real-time email correspondence. In doing so, I have responded to the recent calls for methodological plurality in qualitative entrepreneurship research (Van Burg et al., 2020). By immersing oneself in a research site for a period of time, it is possible to capture the everyday and regular aspects of entrepreneuring in situ as well as what Johannisson (2018) calls "routinised improvisation" in order to deal with an ambiguous and ever-changing world and its associated challenges. I argue that this is unlikely to be covered in retrospective accounts. For example, if I had not shadowed Helena on her trips to Fjord municipality, I would not have been able to observe a broad repertoire of entrepreneurial practices in situ in response to a critical incident in the collaboration. Therefore, the case study of Betz, where the initial phase was retrospectively studied and the remaining process shadowed, observed and co-created as it unfolded in real time, provided a unique opportunity to capture and observe the "doing" of social entrepreneuring over time. Further, without attending the meetings in both studied cases I would have been unable to capture the relational dynamics and

aspects of entrepreneurial activities and practices. Furthermore, drawing on the fact that (social) entrepreneuring is fundamentally collective and unthinkable without social relating, I encourage entrepreneurship researchers to include a wide range of practitioners other than entrepreneurs in the data collection process. One is more likely to capture the nuances of social entrepreneuring by observing how social entrepreneurs interact with others involved in social entrepreneurial activities. For example, in this thesis I have incorporated various voices into the analysis: municipal employees in papers 2 and 4 and a social investor in paper 4 alongside social entrepreneurs. Finally, real-time email correspondence that can be regarded as a form of digital ethnography helps to create webs of interactions. In this study it was particularly helpful in capturing how the key actors involved in the collaboration process negotiated constraints as they emerged over time and how social entrepreneur Helena overcame the social and institutional constraints on entrepreneurial behaviour. Thus, I encourage entrepreneurship researchers to go beyond a focus on researcher-generated material and instead incorporate different kinds of data collection practices into their methodological repertoire.

5.3 Practical and policy implications

Based on this research, it is possible to highlight the implications for practitioners and policymakers. Most importantly, the thesis brings to light a richer and deeper understanding of how public collaboration can unfold and how social entrepreneurs actually enact public collaboration when resourcing their ventures and enabling public services to change by navigating social and institutional constraints arising in a collaborative setting.

First, I draw attention to how social entrepreneurs can benefit from engaging in collaborations. Collaboration is an important mechanism by which social entrepreneurs can resource their ventures to remain economically viable, enable public services to change and increase their social impact. Second, the thesis offers actionable insights into establishing and managing relationships in a collaborative

setting. Entrepreneurs who consider starting a collaboration should allocate enough time to the formation of strong ties and bonding with potential partners. As witnessed in this study, employing practices like engaging and sharing over time that help to create interdependence and strengthen bonds can help entrepreneurs in their pursuit of collaboration. In addition, entrepreneurs should be aware of the importance of emotion management practices and the practice of caring as complementary to widely used practices aimed at strengthening bonds. These are fine-grained examples of practices that can contribute to nurturing relationships beyond frequent interactions. Further, given that in the context of public collaboration entrepreneurs can strategically target individuals with mandates and decision-making power so that they can "show the right way". An awareness of how these practices and processes are "done" may offer some useful guidance on how best to go about creating and nurturing useful relationships. Third, the thesis also underlines the importance of conferences and diverse events that allow unexpected encounters to emerge, offer visibility to potential collaborators and facilitate the carving of niches for collaboration, as in the case of Helena and the Fjord employees. However, as suggested in paper 3, there are also challenges related to employee turnover in public sector organisations as well as professional protectionism, which might undermine the time-consuming efforts to establish relationships and result in resistance from professional personnel responsible for the provision of public services. Fourth, this study highlights the benefits of developing "system knowledge" from various channels, in particular knowledge about how the public sector is organised, financed and functions. Fifth, entrepreneurs can draw on practices of narrating to craft their entrepreneurial stories, which can serve as an effective mechanism for establishing relationships with potential partners and garnering resources for their ventures.

With regard to the socio-political system in Norway, there are important implications for policymakers. One policy implication is awareness of the complexity and multifaceted nature of social venture-public collaborations and their contextual nuances. This enables policymakers to better assess their impact on society and

provide support for social ventures and design policies that facilitate dialogue between social ventures and the local public sector. Knowledge about the processes, actors and challenges that influence the evolution and development of SE can be used by policymakers and public organisations to design interventions that assist and support social entrepreneurial activities. This can help to design targeted support policies and investment mechanisms and create fertile ground for social entrepreneurs to develop. The case of Nature Magic also highlights the significance of bridging organisations that bring social ventures and municipalities together. Further, SIBs represent one of the emerging tools aimed at stimulating and garnering the development of social ventures around the world (and other organisational types), thus representing new unexplored territory for policymakers, social entrepreneurs, investors and other key stakeholders. I argue that it is important to develop a space for experimentation and innovation and a culture of experimenting (e.g. SIBs, Social Bridging Finance) that may or may not turn out to be successful. Policymakers would also benefit from evaluating the outcomes, impact and sustainability of public/institutional approaches versus SE or SE-public collaborative approaches. This will help to identify where SE or SE-public would be the most effective approach and when public policy is required. Further, an investment instrument such as SIBs may be only be able to deal with small-scale social issues, the extent to which outcomes may be clear and measurable and the perceived risk experienced by state actors and/or investors. Whilst in the case of Nature Magic, the SIB model seemed to be an effective solution for addressing a specific local social issue, it might not be as successful on complex social problems.

5.4 Limitations and future research agenda

The findings of the thesis need to be considered in light of several limitations. Additionally, my findings give rise to multiple important future research directions, many of which are outlined as a research agenda in paper 1.

First, one limitation of the thesis is the generalisability of its findings, a limitation commonly associated with qualitative work. From a research design perspective, I

recognise the limitations of relying on two case studies. The study had the potential to include more than two cases, however I was restricted by PhD project timeframe and resource considerations, which entails the need to limit the scope of the study. Two papers comprising the thesis are based on a single, albeit in-depth and longitudinal, case study design in a particular context (the Norwegian welfare state) and therefore the generalisability of my findings may be limited, even if Norway is similar to other Nordic country settings. Thus, the empirical findings of the thesis must be interpreted with caution in terms of generalising and transferring the findings to other contexts because the specific contextual conditions in each country shape the field of social entrepreneuring, making the findings context-sensitive. Nevertheless, I argue that the thesis contributes with a clearer understanding of what social entrepreneurs are likely to do in a collaborative setting and how they do it. This pushes current understandings forward and stakes out the path for future studies that can expand or challenge the perspectives unveiled in my papers. Further research is necessary to examine whether the findings are consistent across other cultures, locations, and sectors to help advance our understanding of what processes and practices social entrepreneurs engage in when they enact collaboration. For example, a relevant question for further studies is how social entrepreneurs are in terms of practicing collaboration between themselves, especially those ones that provide similar services and products. The findings of paper 1 demonstrate that this is an emerging line of research which deserves future scrutiny. Future research also needs to look further into other social entrepreneuring processes and practices for collaboration taking on different societal challenges.

Second, as my main focus and interest in the thesis is on the processes and practices through which social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration and how they navigate the challenges they encounter in their collaborative work, I have not addressed the outcomes and impacts of such collaborative endeavours. Hence, this thesis goes beyond the targets of social entrepreneurial activities – those receiving their services, i.e. the beneficiaries. Their voices are all but absent in this thesis given the aim of the thesis, representing another limitation. With this in mind, I believe that future research

could dig into the outcomes and impacts of such collaborative activities, bringing voices of those groups the interventions are supposed to benefit. Further, their perspectives and stories play a vital role in entrepreneurial resourcing that can be mobilised in their collaborative and resourcing efforts. In view of this, it would be a worthwhile endeavour, given the complex nature of social problems that require multiple organisations, including social ventures and the public sector to coalesce in order to achieve a greater societal impact (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021; Mair, 2020).

The insights emerging from the thesis suggest more research is needed into the microfoundations of collaboration in social venturing as it redirects the traditional lines of inquiry in the extant literature and offers new research avenues. For example, adopting an EaP approach has the potential revisit our understanding of social entrepreneurial activities in a collaborative setting, as paper 2 does. This thesis adds considerably to what is known about entrepreneurial resourcing through collaboration by painting a richer and more dynamic picture than is portrayed in the literature. Hence, I believe much will be gained as studies shift their focus from the transactional exchanges and viewing resources as fixed entities, and instead focus on the playing out of the relational dynamics and collective aspects of resourcing over time. Further, although in this thesis collaboration is studied as a common path to resourcing social ventures, collaboration also serves as an important mechanism for gaining *legitimacy* for social entrepreneurs and their social ventures. Hence, further research might explore the processes and practices social entrepreneurs employ to gain legitimacy through collaboration by drawing on practice theory.

Furthermore, the thesis (in particular, paper 2) reveals an important role of emotion in entrepreneurial resourcing practice. These findings may serve as a platform for raising different intriguing questions to further explore emotions as a part of the entrepreneurs' "tool box" when resourcing their social ventures. Future studies might delve into the practices I have identified and, importantly, strive to reveal new ones, hence, researchers might uncover other inspiring or even surprising practices. Overall,

I feel that a deep understanding of social entrepreneuring as processual phenomenon constituted by practices has only begun and inspires new and exciting research avenues that will generate fresh new insights.

5.5 Concluding reflections

The thesis set out to enhance our understanding of how social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing their social ventures and enabling public services to change. With this thesis, I aim to continue an important conversation on collaboration in SE and social venturing and advance practical knowledge for social entrepreneurs and other practitioners engaged in or aiming to engage in collaboration. Hence, my interest has been to delve into what social entrepreneurs actually *do* when they enact collaboration and immerse myself into the realities of social entrepreneurs, i.e. into the concrete doings, processes and practices of social entrepreneuring, which has been exciting and rewarding. Undoubtedly, this is a fascinating field that deserves much scrutiny. I hope that my thesis and contributions will set the stage for a further focused conversation on this important line of inquiry.

I also believe that better theory and insights into entrepreneurial "doing" will occur through fieldwork, in real time and over time by immersing ourselves in practitioners' realities to understand the complexity of (social) entrepreneuring and multi-theoretical explorations and combinations of diverse methods. In this sense, I champion Dodd et al. (2021, p.23), who argue that 'entrepreneurs create our tomorrows and we have a responsibility to comprehend as well as appreciate what they do…it is time for entrepreneurship to re-position as a connective, heterotopic, engaged and transdisciplinary ecotone; rich, diverse, and embedded in the in-between'.

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PART II. PUBLICATIONS

PAPER 1. Social entrepreneurship organisations and collaboration: taking stock and looking forward

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(Published in *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*)

Social entrepreneurship organisations and collaboration: taking stock and looking forward

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Abstract

Purpose – The aim of this systematic literature review (SLR) is to map out the current state of the research on collaboration in the context of social entrepreneurship organisations (SEOs), synthesise this line of research and advance a research agenda.

Design/methodology/approach – A SLR of 40 scientific articles found in the Scopus and Web of Science databases built the foundation for an analysis of the state-of-the-art of the research addressing the interplay of SEOs and collaboration. This area of research has been very recent since the selected articles have been published since 2005 and more than half of which have appeared since 2017.

Findings – The findings suggest that collaboration is increasingly perceived as a crucial entrepreneurial activity and process for SEOs. The results indicate that collaboration is a vibrant and rapidly growing line of research which spans different fields of study, contexts, varied theoretical perspectives and multiple units of analysis. Furthermore, a total of five key research themes are identified pertaining to collaboration in the context of SEOs, such as motivations and strategies of collaboration, its antecedents, the interplay of institutional logics and tensions arising in collaboration, the impact of collaboration on the mission of SEOs and collaborative processes and practices.

Originality/value – To lend structure to this fragmented field of inquiry, this study systematically reviews and synthesises research on collaboration in the context of SEOs. In doing so, the study reveals that this line of research is under-researched, offering a significant scope for further scrutiny.

Keywords Social entrepreneurship organisations, Collaboration, Systematic literature review

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Social entrepreneurship organisations (SEOs) are organisations that engage in social entrepreneurship by adopting entrepreneurial and/or innovative behaviour to achieve public benefit (Kimmitt and Muñoz, 2018; Lewis *et al.*, 2021). A promising yet understudied aspect of SEOs is *collaboration* (Barinaga, 2020; Bojica *et al.*, 2018; de Bruin *et al.*, 2016). Research suggests that collaboration is a shared feature of SEOs across contexts (Mair, 2020), a critical entrepreneurial activity and resourcing practice (de Bruin *et al.*, 2016; Dwivedi and Weerawardena, 2018; Huybrechts *et al.*, 2017; Kimmitt and Muñoz, 2018). Empirical evidence goes further and suggests that many SEOs are collaborative in nature (Mair, 2020), holding a "collaborative mentality" (Tasavori *et al.*, 2018), which results in collaborative, as opposed to competitive, behaviour towards other organisations (Arenas *et al.*, 2020; Kickul and Lyons, 2020).

Three main arguments drive the increasing interest. First, in the case of SEOs, collaboration is particularly relevant, since they face ongoing and more salient resourcing challenges due to their social mission, which often drives them to forsake healthier margins

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(Bojica *et al.*, 2018; Lewis *et al.*, 2021; Zahra *et al.*, 2014). Essentially, collaboration with other entities may represent an important resourcing practice for SEOs (de Bruin *et al.*, 2016; McDermott *et al.*, 2018). Second, in response to the complex nature of social problems and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals which require collaborative efforts, new forms of collaborations, including SEOs have begun to emerge (Bacq and Lumpkin, 2021; de Bruin *et al.*, 2016; Günzel-Jensen *et al.*, 2020; Intindola *et al.*, 2020; Weber *et al.*, 2017). Third, considering SEOs' capacity to reduce the burden on social welfare systems, governments and policymakers have added incentives to spur SEO collaborations. Therefore, this article provides an interdisciplinary review of studies dealing with SEOs and collaboration at the interorganizational level, where collaboration is conceptualised as a voluntary process which helps other organisational partners to achieve common goals or one or more of their private goals (Castañer and Oliveira, 2020).

Despite significant progress in the field of SEO collaboration, two important limitations persist. First, our knowledge about how, why and when SEO collaboration occurs remains fragmented (de Bruin *et al.*, 2016). The interdisciplinary nature of this concept is one of the primary causes of this fragmentation. Second, there is a tendency to start anew in every study, often driven by a lack of systematisation and categorisation. Therefore, there is a risk of field stagnation and poor robustness. This also makes it difficult to take stock of what we know about the interplay between SEOs and collaboration and to identify future research opportunities.

Thus, this article provides a systematic literature review (SLR) of the current state of research on collaboration in the context of SEOs to alleviate the aforementioned gaps and limitations. Following established practices (Kraus *et al.*, 2020; Pittaway *et al.*, 2014), this study systematically reviews and synthesises 40 peer-reviewed articles found in journals listed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases. Specifically, this article addresses the following questions: (1) what is the state-of-the-art of research on collaboration in the context of SEOs? (2) what are the emerging themes of interest in SEO research? (3) what are the implications for future research suggested by the findings? To address these questions, this study aims to (1) map out the interdisciplinary literature on SEO collaboration, using the analysis to appraise the key research themes and (2) outline suggestions for where future scholarship in this domain might be directed by identifying important research questions for further scrutiny.

By systematically reviewing the literature on collaboration in the context of SEOs, the review makes a number of contributions to the field. First, by taking stock of the current literature, the progress of the field over the period (2005–2021) is mapped out, general trends are discussed. Furthermore, the various theories, conceptual perspectives, research contexts and methodological trends are also discussed. Second, some structure is brought to the fragmented literature by identifying the five key research themes which have been inductively developed from the literature: motivations and strategies of collaboration, its antecedents, the interplay of institutional logic and tensions arising in collaboration, the impact of collaboration on the mission of SEOs and collaborative processes and practices. Third, considering the identified themes, this study delineates potential research avenues and relevant research questions that are worthy of further investigation. Accordingly, the review contributes to the further development of this field by developing an agenda for future research based on the thematic analysis of the extant literature.

The next section discusses the foundations of SEOs and collaboration to motivate and establish the boundaries of the review, which is followed by a summary of the methodology. Then a synthesis of key trends, contexts, theories and methodologies is provided. The article then summarises the results of five key themes. And finally, the conclusions and directions for future research are presented in the last section.

Setting the scene: foundations of SEOs and collaboration

SEOs

Social entrepreneurship and SEOs have blossomed in recent decades. This study understands social entrepreneurship as the process of launching a hybrid organisational form that creates social value (the social side) through market-based activities (the entrepreneurial side). Furthermore, the creation of new ventures or managing existing organisations in an innovative manner differentiates social entrepreneurship from other forms of prosocial or change-driven activities (Saebi *et al.*, 2019). Accordingly, SEOs represent the organisational forms in which the activity of social entrepreneurship manifests itself (Chell *et al.*, 2010; Mair *et al.*, 2012; Meyskens *et al.*, 2010).

In line with previous research (Bojica *et al.*, 2018; Douglas, 2010; Margiono *et al.*, 2018) and given the abovementioned aspects of social entrepreneurship as entrepreneurial activity, this study concurs with the understanding of SEOs as an umbrella term for diverse forms of organisations that pursue prosocial objectives by leveraging market-based activities. Following Douglas *et al.* (2018), this conceptualisation accounts for a broad range of organisations, including social enterprises (Bull *et al.*, 2018; McMullen, 2018), social ventures (or social *entrepreneurial* ventures) (Günzel-Jensen *et al.*, 2020; Katre and Salipante, 2012), community enterprises (Hertel *et al.*, 2019, 2021; Vestrum, 2014), cooperatives and social businesses (Gold *et al.*, 2019). While the definition is broad, each of these SEO forms has some distinguishing features and will vary depending on context (for extended reviews see Defourny and Nyssens, 2017; Douglas *et al.*, 2018). Importantly, this review excludes the term "social purpose organisations" (Kullak *et al.*, 2021; Weerawardena *et al.*, 2021) as they include traditional non-profit and nongovernmental organisations that rely exclusively on public funding and philanthropy, which lie outside this review's scope. The focus on economic activity is important to differentiate SEOs from purely social movements, non-profit and nongovernmental organisations, charitable organisations and philanthropic initiatives.

SEO collaboration

Recently, a new and important research stream has emerged that emphasises the role of collaboration in the context of SEOs and underscores their collaboration-oriented behaviour (Bojica *et al.*, 2018; de Bruin *et al.*, 2016; Mair, 2020; Pret and Carter, 2017). Although collaboration is the focus of interest in many related fields of study, the literature on SEO collaboration recently began exploring an important aspect of the social entrepreneurial process – the role that collaboration plays in social value creation, resourcing and the development of SEOs. In challenging the "heroic" stance of social entrepreneurs leading SEOs, much of social entrepreneurship is collaborative (Montgomery *et al.*, 2012), meaning that SEOs demonstrate their collaborative behaviour by tapping into relationships and linking with diverse actors within and across sectors (de Bruin *et al.*, 2016; Heinze *et al.*, 2016; Tasavori *et al.*, 2018). These collaborations may take many forms, ranging from relatively informal to co-creation collaborations and contractual partnerships. Such collaborations enable SEOs to accomplish their prosocial objectives across numerous levels to achieve social change (Montgomery *et al.*, 2012).

The emergent literature has shown that collaboration is a widespread resourcing practice among SEOs, whether they act in hostile contexts marked by scarcity of resources or in more generous and resourceful ones (Barraket *et al.*, 2019; Chell *et al.*, 2010; Renko, 2013; Zahra *et al.*, 2009). As SEOs face more severe resourcing constraints compared to their conventional counterparts, collaboration is regarded as an important factor in their success, allowing SEOs to access resources from diverse partner relationships and develop effective resource strategies (Choi, 2015; Lehner, 2014). Unlike for-profit organisations, SEOs do not seek resources to gain a competitive advantage or develop competitive barriers (Arenas *et al.*, 2020). Instead, they "view their markets as ripe for friendships that they can use to improve

social value creation, increase the number of customers they reach, lower cost of inputs, and turn competitors into collaborators" (Tasavori *et al.*, 2018, p. 338). Research has also demonstrated that SEOs tend to engage in external networks or collaborative bricolage, involving the utilisation of resources from external partners and co-creating a joint initiative (Kwong *et al.*, 2017; Tasavori *et al.*, 2018). This research area highlights the ability to engage in collaborative behaviour as an important feature of SEOs across different contexts (Mair, 2020).

Focusing on the literature exploring collaboration in the context of SEOs, several important streams of literature are emerging. First, a prominent stream in this literature builds on the fields of interorganizational collaboration in examining cross-sector partnerships (Huybrechts and Nicholls, 2013; Rey-García *et al.*, 2019; Savarese *et al.*, 2020; Weidner *et al.*, 2019) and social alliances (Liu *et al.*, 2018; Sakarya *et al.*, 2012). It involves hybrid SEOs, which are guided by multiple forms of institutional logics. These partnerships are not limited to the mutual pursuit of economic benefits but serve the purpose of creating social value. Second, recognising the socially embedded nature of entrepreneurial activity (Jack and Anderson, 2002; McKeever *et al.*, 2015), the second stream of literature demonstrates SEOs' engagement with diverse organisations and actors in their communities to develop collaborative local solutions and pursue collaborative social innovation for sustainable growth, thereby creating social value (de Bruin *et al.*, 2016; Heinze *et al.*, 2016; Jenner and Oprescu, 2016; Pret and Carter, 2017; Vannebo and Grande, 2018). SEOs are thus viewed as being embedded in the community and as using networks as a means of facilitating collaborative activities both within the sector and externally via the public sector, businesses, corporations and communities (Jenner and Oprescu, 2016). However, studies conducted from this perspective were less frequent. Third, an emerging line of research, drawing on the fields of strategic management and entrepreneurship, shows that social enterprises might also engage in coopetition practices – simultaneous cooperation and competition behaviours – with other social enterprises within the same industry (Arenas *et al.*, 2020) or different types of organisations across sectors (Herbst, 2019). This nascent research demonstrates that coopetition behaviour plays a significant role in achieving SEOs' social and commercial objectives.

Research has taken an inconsistent approach to conceptualising collaboration in the context of SEOs, yet it remains an important aspect of the social entrepreneurial process. Collaboration is often left undefined or emphasising the sharing of goals, activities, information, resources, joint development of goods or services and common goals. The definition of collaboration used in this article builds on the recent study of Castañer and Oliveira (2020), who leveraged conceptual clarifications about collaboration, coordination and cooperation among organisations. For the purpose and focus of this study, collaboration, therefore, refers to a voluntary process of helping other organisational partners to achieve common goals or one or more of their private goals. This definition emphasises the processual nature of collaborative activity, attitude (i.e. willingness to collaborate), relational type of behaviour and commitment and outcome.

Although the important role of collaboration in the context of SEOs might seem apparent, research spans different fields of research, contexts, varied theoretical perspectives and multiple units of analysis. Our understanding of what is happening at the organisational level between SEOs and other organisations and actors within and across sectors is still limited.

Method: a systematic literature review

The SLR methodology has been discussed in detail elsewhere (Kraus *et al.*, 2020; Pittaway *et al.*, 2014). An SLR, which is well-established in entrepreneurship and management research, was conducted to map the emerging yet already diverse research on collaboration in

the context of SEOs (Henry and Foss, 2015; Korsgaard, 2013; Kraus *et al.*, 2020; Lattacher and Wdowiak, 2020; Pittaway *et al.*, 2014). An SLR is a review of an existing body of literature on the topic that follows a transparent and reproducible methodology for searching, assessing its quality and synthesising it, with a high level of objectivity (Kraus *et al.*, 2020). This method allows in-depth analysis of each study considered, identifying research gaps and outlining future theoretical and/or methodological research directions. Following the guidelines of Short (2009) and Tranfield *et al.* (2003), which are well grounded in entrepreneurship research, this study performed the steps outlined in Figure 1. SLR was deemed necessary to consolidate literature that spans different fields of study and journals to collate the scattered findings, identify key themes and synthesise emerging yet already diverse research areas (Snyder, 2019). This approach is systematic, rigorous and transparent (Denyer and Tranfield, 2008; Kraus *et al.*, 2020; Tranfield *et al.*, 2003; Wang and Chugh, 2014) to ensure synthesis and consistent results.

Data collection

In compiling the sample, the search was undertaken using two bibliographical database services, Scopus and Web of Science, which are among the largest multidisciplinary sources in the social sciences to make the search more comprehensive. Following a systematic review procedure and setting the inclusion criteria, first, the Scopus database was searched for journal articles published from 2005 to 2021 (inclusive) containing the keywords "social entrepr*", "social enterpr*", "social venture*", "co-operative*", "community enterprise*", "social business*" in combination with any of the terms "collaboration*", "cooperation*", "interorganizational", "networking", "partnership*" in the titles, abstracts or keywords, as is common in similar research in the field (Lattacher and Wdowiak, 2020). The search terms were divided into two thematic search strings based on the concepts used in the RQs: concepts commonly used in scholarly literature to describe SEOs and concepts used to describe collaboration. To reduce the number and diversity of identified records, the search query was limited to three subject areas: social sciences; business, management and accounting; and multidisciplinary.

To ensure the highest quality and scholarly standards, only peer-reviewed articles published in journals were subject to review (Kraus *et al.*, 2020; Pret and Cogan, 2019), therefore excluding books, book chapters and other non-refereed publications, since the review process enhances quality control, which validates the knowledge produced (Saebi *et al.*, 2019). Following recent reviews in entrepreneurship research (Pret and Cogan, 2019; Radu-Lefebvre *et al.*, 2021), the search was limited to articles published in ranked journals according to the Chartered Association of Business Schools Journal Guide (2021) (ABS) to identify a robust sample. This initial search in the Scopus database rendered 742 articles, of which 205 were published in ABS-ranked journals.

To ensure that the initial search in Scopus did not omit relevant texts (Bramer *et al.*, 2017), the search was run through the Web of Science database using the same search strings but without limitations in terms of subject areas. This second search yielded 541 articles, of which 128 were published in ABS-ranked journals. The iterative data search was completed on 10 June 2021 which marked the cut-off date for data collection and resulted in an initial sample of 333 articles published in ABS-ranked journals.

Several different exclusion criteria were developed to ensure a systematic and reliable approach. The following exclusion criteria were set: (1) research focus: SEO collaboration was not central to the article as the purpose; (2) an article only tenuously linked to collaboration in the context of SEOs; (3) an article focuses on organisations that do not leverage market-based activities (depending on philanthropy and/or government subsidy); and (4) access: an article is not accessible. For example, articles focusing on non-profit organisations which do not engage in trading activities or peer collaboration in cooperatives were excluded from the

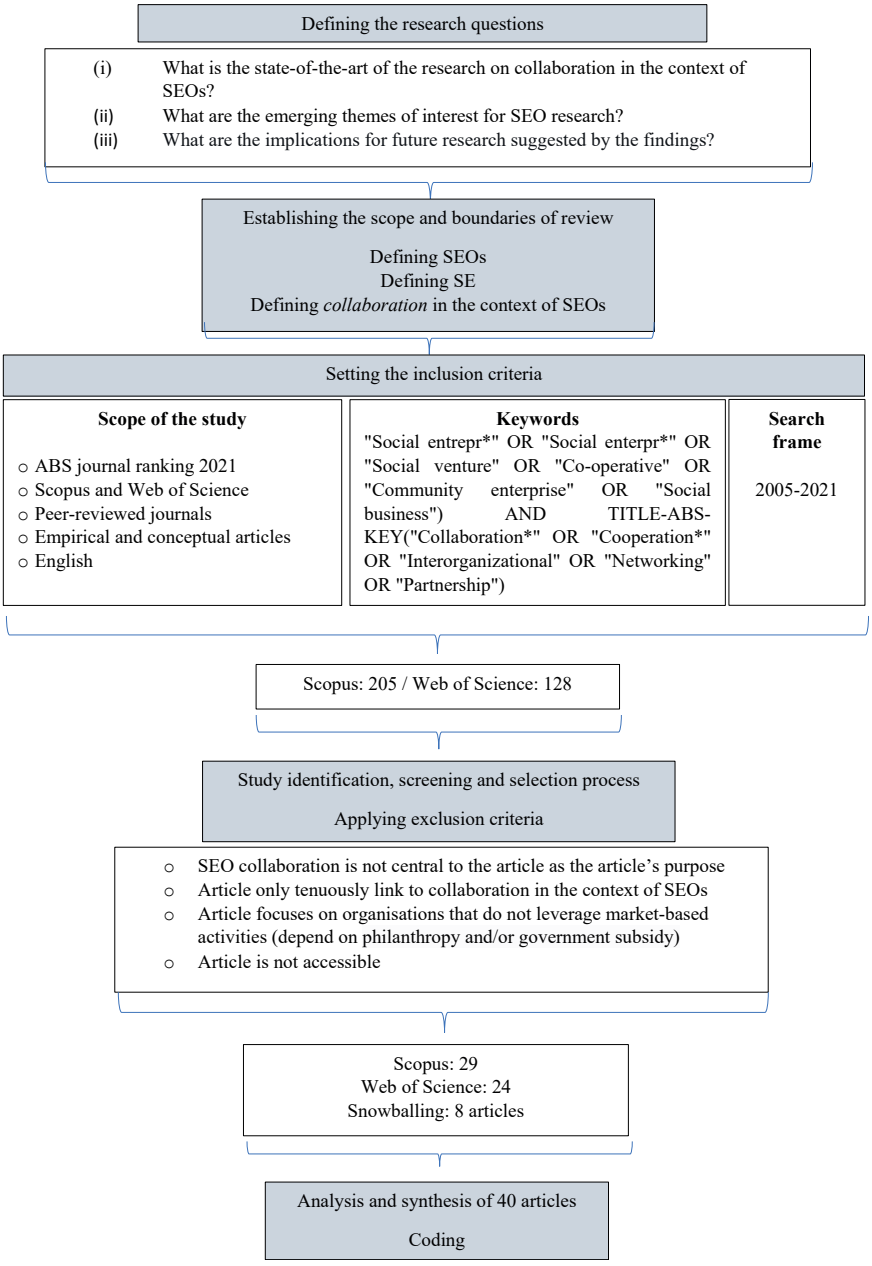

Figure 1.
Summary of the systematic review methodology

sample. Scrutinising against the exclusion criteria and reading the abstracts of these publications, 29 articles from Scopus and 24 from Web of Science were found to be relevant. After eliminating 21 duplicates, the remaining 32 articles were reviewed in full. During this process and through citation tracking, eight additional articles were included, as all articles specifically discussed collaboration in the context of SEOs, leading to a final sample of 40 articles. For example, Huybrechts and Nicholls' study (2013) did not appear in the databases, although their study was explicitly linked to collaboration in the context of SEOs.

This sample size is adequate for a systematic review, and several prior studies have used a similar number of articles (Chavoushi *et al.*, 2020; Fraser *et al.*, 2018; Lattacher and Wdowiak, 2020; Pret and Cogan, 2019). Furthermore, the small sample size is strength because it enables critical engagement with each study through the unpacking of themes (Hueso *et al.*, 2020; Korsgaard, 2013).

The articles in Appendix (Table A1) were analysed following two main rounds of coding: (1) descriptive categorisation of articles and (2) identification of higher-order themes. First, to sort the articles and map descriptive patterns, the articles were coded based on the predefined thematic codes commonly used in literature reviews, such as name(s) of authors, year of publication, journal title, theoretical perspective(s), methodological approach(es), geographical context of the study and organisational form. The articles were also sorted according to their type (conceptual or empirical). This initial coding was used to develop an Appendix, which provides an overview of the sample. At the second stage of analysis, the articles were coded using an "open coding" approach (Corbin and Strauss, 1990; Pret and Cogan, 2019) to identify key themes based on frequency. A thematic analysis facilitated the grouping of the examined studies into themes depending on their central focus of inquiry. Themes were therefore inductively derived from a holistic understanding of each article through an iterative process of reading and re-visiting the selected articles in order to ensure a higher degree of reliability. As a result of this iterative process, five key themes were identified. Among the articles examined, it became apparent that several studies' central focus and contribution permeated across multiple themes.

The results are presented in the following sections. First, descriptive analyses and general trends in the literature are reported. Second, to answer the second research question, the five key themes generated through thematic analysis are discussed and reported in the second part of the analysis of the results. Finally, a research agenda is developed and key areas for future research are identified.

Discussion of findings: descriptive analysis of the literature

Publication distribution

The distribution of articles on collaboration in the context of SEOs across 21 journals is shown in Table 1. The published journals span fields including entrepreneurship and small business management, public administration, non-profit management, economics, organisation studies and sustainability. Table 1 shows that 30 articles were published in entrepreneurship and business journals, 18 of which were evenly distributed across three journals: *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development* ($n = 6$), *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship* ($n = 6$) and *Journal of Business Ethics* ($n = 6$). The first (conceptual) article on collaboration between community enterprises and corporations appeared in 2005 in the Journal of Business Ethics (i.e. Tracey *et al.*, 2005). Since then, the number of articles has consistently increased (see Figure 2). There has been a recent upsurge, as 55% of articles ($n = 22$) in the sample were published between 2017 and 2021, thereby highlighting the scholarly interest in the area. Within the entrepreneurship field of study, the 2017 Special Issue "The collaborative dynamic in social entrepreneurship", edited by de Bruin *et al.* (2016)

Journal title and subject area	Total article count
Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management	
Entrepreneurship and Regional Development	6
Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	6
Journal of Business Ethics	6
Social Enterprise Journal	3
Journal of Management Studies	1
Management Decision	1
Business Strategy and the Environment	1
Business Strategy and Development	1
Journal of Business Research	2
International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business	1
Business and Society	1
Journal of Enterprising Communities	1
Public Administration	
Public Money and Management	1
Public Policy and Administration	1
Nonprofit Management	
Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations	1
Nonprofit Management and Leadership	1
Nonprofit ana Voluntary Sector Quarterly	1
Economics	
Construction Management and Economics	1
Organisation studies	
Organisation Studies	2
Sustainability	
The Journal of Corporate Citizenship	1
Journal of Cleaner Production	1
Total	
21 journal	40 articles

Table 1.
Subject categories and associated journals

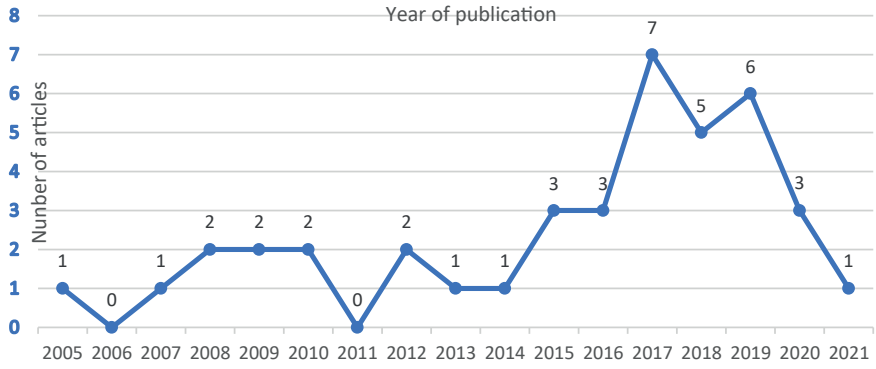

Figure 2.
Number of articles published between 2005 and 2021

in *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development* played an important role in advancing research in this area, as four of the articles in the analysis are from this issue.

In terms of methodological orientation, as set out in Appendix, most of the selected studies ($n = 33$) were empirical, while conceptual articles ($n = 6$) and special issue overview articles ($n = 2$) contributed about 17% of the total sample. This further supports that the interplay of SEOs and collaboration is an emerging and multidisciplinary area of research scattered across a number of disciplines and journals.

Research contexts

It is widely recognised that our understanding of entrepreneurship cannot be divorced from multiple contexts and social structures in which SEOs are embedded (Berglund *et al.*, 2012; Stirzaker *et al.*, 2021). The review sample shows heterogeneity in contextual orientation (see Appendix). Considering geographical context, the review sample covers 14 countries in five different regions, as shown in Appendix. Some countries have received more attention than others. The UK ($n = 13$) has been the most frequent contextual setting for academic scrutiny, with 33% of articles; however, four articles focused on social enterprise-corporate collaboration (Di Domenico *et al.*, 2009; Huybrechts and Nicholls, 2013; Savarese *et al.*, 2020; Tracey *et al.*, 2005), while the other four seminal articles focused on the relationships between SEOs and the public sector to secure public sector contracts for the provision of local public services (Chapman *et al.*, 2007; Muñoz, 2009; Muñoz and Tinsley, 2008; Simmons, 2008). While most of the research on collaboration in the context of SEOs has focused on European countries ($n = 23$), Oceania ($n = 4$) and America ($n = 4$), the focus on developing countries remains limited, with three articles featuring empirical data from Korea, Mexico and Bangladesh (Choi, 2015; Gold *et al.*, 2019; Intindola *et al.*, 2020). Surprisingly, no studies have been identified from the rapidly growing social entrepreneurship literature emerging from India or South America. Additionally, most of the articles had a single geographical location, but some examined two ($n = 2$), three ($n = 1$) and more than three countries ($n = 1$). This indicates a need for further research that crosses national boundaries.

The results highlight the uneven geographical coverage of existing research on collaboration in the context of SEOs across developed and developing countries. As only three studies explore SEO collaboration in developing countries, there is a clear need for more research into a broader range of contexts and geographic areas, such as SEO collaboration at the bottom of the pyramid (BoP) context of the Global South (Gold *et al.*, 2019). Future studies could also compare the collaboration of SEOs in the UK – a setting with the highest rates of SEOs – with the findings in other settings and/or cultures.

Moreover, the role of spatial context (urban vs. rural) (Müller and Korsgaard, 2018) appears to be underrepresented in the sample with one study (Pret and Carter, 2017), which focuses on the collaborative activities of craft entrepreneurs in rural communities. Thus, future studies could pay more attention to the spatial context, as collaboration might play out in different ways in rural and urban contexts. In terms of organisational forms under umbrella of SEOs, the social enterprise sector has proven the most popular, while only a few studies have examined the collaborative activities of other organisational forms such as social ventures (Barinaga, 2016; Meyskens *et al.*, 2010), indigenous health co-operatives (Barth *et al.*, 2015) and conversion foundations (Heinze *et al.*, 2016). It is suggested, as Barinaga (2020) correctly stated, that there is a need for further research to contextualise diverse types of collaboration through which SEOs organise for social change and how various contexts influence the likelihood of forming collaborations. Owing to contextual differences, the types of collaboration, entrepreneurial practices, strategies and behaviours of social entrepreneurs may vary greatly across contexts.

Furthermore, although research has examined SEO collaboration across different locations and sectors (e.g. fair trade, social service sector, healthcare, energy and craft),

comparative studies exploring the collaborative aspects of SEOs operating in different sectors and industries would be very insightful. Such comparative studies could potentially reveal the differences in challenges and opportunities for collaboration of SEOs within a given sector. There is also a need to understand the effects of multiple contextual influences on collaborative practices, processes and outcomes (de Bruin *et al.*, 2016). Hence, future research could not only go beyond the most studied geographical contexts and sectors with which SEOs are affiliated, but also consider the multiple contextual influences on collaboration, such as historical, cultural, temporal, sectoral, political, governmental and many others (Barinaga, 2020; Shepherd and Wiklund, 2020; Welter and Baker, 2020).

Theoretical frameworks

In addition to the trends demonstrated above, the analysis provides important insights into the use of theory and methods. This review highlights the diversity of theoretical perspectives from various disciplines, such as strategic management, sociology, public administration and entrepreneurship that are used to provide valuable insights into the nature, outcomes and challenges of collaboration in the context of SEOs. In mapping the landscape of the theories used, 34 studies reported the use of theory. Theories such as institutional theory and the resource-based view of the firm (RBV) are most commonly used to study the nature of collaboration in the context of SEOs. The most common approach proved to be institutional theory ($n = 9$) (e.g. Gillett *et al.*, 2016; Huybrechts *et al.*, 2017; Mitzinneck and Besharov, 2019; Weidner *et al.*, 2019), in particular, the institutional logic perspective (e.g. Barth *et al.*, 2015; Gillett *et al.*, 2019), organisational legitimacy (Huybrechts and Nicholls, 2013; Weidner *et al.*, 2019) and a new institutionalist perspective (Barraket and Loosemore, 2018). As this suggests, SEOs are organisations that combine two (or more) institutional logics, and collaboration with external organisations might shape the configuration of logics and influence potential inter-logic tensions experienced by SEOs (Gillett *et al.*, 2019; Savarese *et al.*, 2020) that can lead to mission drift (Barinaga, 2020).

The second most frequently used theoretical framework is RBV ($n = 5$). When applied in the context of SEO collaboration, studies drawing insights from RBV (e.g. Choi, 2015; Liu *et al.*, 2018) have focused on what types of partners provide particular types of resources to SEOs (Choi, 2015) and how synergy-sensitive resources manifest in collaborations (Gold *et al.*, 2019). Overall, using RBV, previous research suggests that better collaboration performance and competitive advantage can be achieved through collaboration management routines by unlocking, reconfiguring and institutionalising resources that exist in partner relationships (Liu *et al.*, 2018; Rey-García *et al.*, 2019). Although this line of research drawing on RBV has been helpful in providing valuable insights into different aspects of SEO collaboration, this stream of research has a number of limitations. For example, these studies rarely observe SEO collaborations as they unfold in real-time and thereby offer a static and limited view. Further, previous research, which follows lines of reasoning from RBV and resource dependency theory, provides a static conceptualisation of the resources that are "out there", waiting to be identified and acquired by social entrepreneurs over time, without explaining how resources gain their value (Keating *et al.*, 2014). This assumes SEOs know which kind of partners and resources they will need and which outcomes might emerge from them (Elfring *et al.*, 2021). However, recent studies indeed have shown that "resources emerge as they are engaged with, in real time and over time, and as a consequence of and impetus to entrepreneurs" ongoing resourcing efforts' (Keating *et al.*, 2014, p. 2; Korsgaard *et al.*, 2021).

By prolonging this line of thought, very little insight exists to advance our understanding of the entrepreneurial resourcing process in SEOs through *collaboration*. In particular, what remains especially largely unaddressed is the entrepreneurial practices that facilitate the enactment of resources through collaboration with other organisations. This creates an opportunity to apply practice theories and a process perspective, especially considering the

growing prominence of more processual and practice-based understandings of entrepreneurship, or as Johannisson (2018) labels it, "social entrepreneuring". The application of practice theories is also likely to provide deeper insights into microfoundations of SEO collaboration, micro-actions and interactions of social entrepreneurs and their partners (Hydle and Billington, 2021; Resch and Steyaert, 2020). This approach shifts the focus from structures and governance of collaborations to entrepreneurial "doings" for collaboration. Further, recent research (Moss *et al.*, 2021) has shown that not only social entrepreneurs may act resourcefully but prosocial collaborations and partnerships can also yield resourceful behaviours. Thus, future research would benefit from looking at SEO collaboration from complementary theoretical lenses such as entrepreneurial theories of resourcefulness (Barraket *et al.*, 2019) which can offer novel contributions to the literature.

Further theories represented in the sample were predominantly theories from sociology, such as social capital (Jenner and Oprescu, 2016), Bourdieu's theory of field (Pret and Carter, 2017), embeddedness (Vannebo and Grande, 2018), social exchange theory (Di Domenico *et al.*, 2009), identity theory (Smith *et al.*, 2014); entrepreneurship theories, such as opportunity recognition (Henry, 2015; McDermott *et al.*, 2018); and public administration, for example, collaborative governance (Smeets, 2017). Therefore, established theoretical lenses from various disciplines can be effectively used to shed light on emerging phenomena in varied contexts. In addition to the above theoretical frameworks, research on collaboration in the context of SEOs could benefit from incorporating a collective action perspective given recent developments in entrepreneurship research, such as a shift from the concept of a heroic individual towards a more collective and collaborative endeavour (Bacq and Lumpkin, 2021; Ben-Hafaïedh and Dufays, 2021; de Bruin *et al.*, 2016; Branzei *et al.*, 2018). This might advance our understanding of the collective interpersonal dynamics in SEO collaboration.

In contrast to the focus on a single theory, only a few studies ($n = 3$) combined two or more theoretical frameworks to analyse the collaborative aspects of SEOs, thereby promoting theoretical syntheses (e.g. Kwong *et al.*, 2017; Meyskens *et al.*, 2010; Pret and Carter, 2017), which envisages research opportunities that leverage multiple theories that might be deployed in a novel fashion or combined with other theories. One such promising area for future research is the influence of different forms of embeddedness on the enactment and shaping of practices for collaboration. Furthermore, practice theory can be integrated with institutional theory in order to provide new insights into the impact of social entrepreneurs' agency and the effects of their collaborations with other organisations on the missions, vision and practices of collaborating partners and also on broader institutional and societal structures (de Bruin *et al.*, 2016).

Methodological trends

Research on SEO collaboration utilises qualitative, quantitative and conceptual approaches, but most of the articles use qualitative methodologies. Among the 40 studies in the sample, six are conceptual in nature; 28 used qualitative approaches; four used quantitative approaches, and one used a mixed-method approach. Most studies adopt a qualitative approach based on case studies as commonly used method for exploration of an underdeveloped topic and in-depth semi-structured interviews. In some cases (e.g. Pret and Carter, 2017), a phenomenological approach is utilised for in-depth investigations of collaborative activities. Very few have opted for ethnographic or alternative, situated and interventionist approaches, for example, engaged scholarship (e.g. Barinaga, 2016). Additionally, these studies rarely adopt longitudinal study designs (e.g. Gillett *et al.*, 2016, 2019; Pret and Carter, 2017) observing SEO collaboration as it unfolds in real-time, which makes capturing the dynamics and theorising processes and practices difficult in that the findings become blunt, vague and abstracted from actual entrepreneurial "doings" for

collaboration and interactions. As shown, quantitative studies remain scant, and the exploratory character of the majority of studies signals the emerging nature of this field. A few scholars have used surveys conducted at a single point in time by designing large-scale studies (Intindola *et al.*, 2020; Weidner *et al.*, 2019) to encompass collaboration in diverse localities or to gain sectoral variance.

Therefore, research on collaboration on the interplay of SEOs and collaboration can be significantly enhanced using more methodological diversity. Both theory-building and theory-testing studies are promising for examining different aspects of collaboration in the context of SEOs. This points to the opportunity to use case-based and longitudinal studies to unpack how collaboration unfolds over time and to illuminate the behaviours that SEOs adopt at different stages of collaboration, thereby providing a more dynamic, longitudinal perspective. This is particularly important, as much of the research focuses on the static aspects of SEO collaboration, thereby lacking a more dynamic understanding of the collaboration process over time. In a similar vein, there is a need for methodologies that allow scholars to capture the everyday lived experience of participants and the real-time entrepreneurial actions ("doings") for collaboration. Therefore, more in-depth longitudinal explorations of collaboration in the context of SEOs are warranted.

Thematic analysis

The descriptive analysis of the literature indicated that although research focusing on collaboration in the context of SEOs has recently reflected the increasing scholarly attention, it remains fragmented and spans different fields of study, contexts, varied theoretical perspectives and multiple units of analysis. The following thematic analysis therefore attempts to address the second research question of this review, that is, to map and consolidate the literature by appraising the dominant research themes.

Through thematic analysis, five themes accounted for the conceptual and empirical findings: motivations and strategies, antecedents of collaboration, the interplay of institutional logics and tensions in collaborations, the impact of collaboration on the mission of social enterprises and collaborative processes and practices for collaboration. The thematic patterns, the nature of each theme and the main sources that exemplify particular themes, are now discussed.

Motivations and strategies

Extant research frequently investigates the theme of motivation which focuses on why SEOs and their partners engage in collaboration with a particular emphasis on their values and goals, as well as the strategies used to form such collaborations. A common finding is that SEOs enact collaborations to scale their social impact and expand social value creation through collaboration (Barraket and Loosemore, 2018; Di Domenico *et al.*, 2009; Sakarya *et al.*, 2012). Smith *et al.* (2014) also stress the important role of "social" motives in explaining the behaviour of SEO leaders, suggesting that being driven by socialising – the purposeful pursuit of social objectives at the expense of financial efficiency – social entrepreneurs establish strategic alliances.

A closer examination of studies reveals that collaboration with organisations within and across sectors also serves as a driver for SEOs by improving access to resources, competencies and funding (Di Domenico *et al.*, 2009; Meyskens *et al.*, 2010; Sakarya *et al.*, 2012). Another cluster of studies posits that collaboration between SEOs and other actors are not limited to exchange relationships for resources, but that it also provides opportunities for synergy or collaborative advantage because partners cannot solve social problems on their own (Henry, 2015). Collaboration also allows to improve public and community service

delivery (Henry, 2015; Simmons, 2008), build local support and credibility and increase community capacity (Heinze *et al.*, 2016; Pret and Carter, 2017; Sakarya *et al.*, 2012).

Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that in addition to access to resources, SEOs are guided by their search for organisational legitimacy in developing collaboration with corporations (Huybrechts and Nicholls, 2013). While external legitimacy is important for SEOs, more recently, research has also recognised the importance of establishing inter-partner legitimacy through collaborations by developing stakeholder-specific legitimising strategies (Weidner *et al.*, 2019). This research reinforces the role of inter-partner legitimacy in resourcing and legitimising SEOs as the support that is gained from establishing collaborations is a result of either a transfer of legitimacy through the partnership directly or of the exchange of specific resources. Huybrechts *et al.* (2017) demonstrate how fair-trade SEOs engage with mainstream business corporations to "institutionalise" hybridity and fair trade in mainstream markets by adopting an active appropriation strategy and embedding a social welfare logic in corporations' market logic. As there are profound distinctions between SEOs and corporations, there is a need for research on these types of collaborations in other contexts, such as the BoP context of the Global South.

While motivations are covered in-depth in the extant literature, little attention has been paid to the motivations of SEOs to collaborate between themselves, especially if they provide similar services and/or products, serve similar beneficiary groups and often compete for the same public support. Research demonstrates that some SEOs, such as conversion foundations in the US (Heinze *et al.*, 2016) collaborate with one another, and social enterprises can form social enterprise partnerships (Henry, 2015), which can play a central role in social entrepreneurial opportunity recognition. At the same time, nascent research (Arenas *et al.*, 2020) suggests that social enterprises operating in the same field engage in both competitive and cooperative behaviours simultaneously. Essentially, little is known about whether SEOs are more collaborative in pursuing shared social outcomes in terms of interfirm competition and how collaborations between SEOs shape the entrepreneurial process.

Antecedents of collaboration

Antecedents of collaboration, that is, various factors and conditions that influence SEOs' collaborative efforts and outcomes, have gained much scholarly interest, which is not surprising as collaborations can be difficult to establish and even more difficult to sustain (de Bruin *et al.*, 2016). The literature emphasises social entrepreneur-related, organisational, relational and context-specific factors. Entrepreneur-level factors relate to social entrepreneurs' attributes that influence the potential for collaboration and success. These studies identify leadership, professional skills, personal drive and socialising as individual factors in explaining the success of SEO collaborations with other organisations (e.g. Maase and Bossink, 2010; Smeets, 2017). Organisational antecedents comprise the SEOs' positive reputation among different stakeholders and prior collaborative experience (e.g. Gillett *et al.*, 2016; Maase and Bossink, 2010; Smith *et al.*, 2014). In terms of relational antecedents, research has revealed several factors that are important for SEO collaboration: trust, shared motivation and social mission, relational embeddedness, social capital, (task) interdependence, existing networks, relational governance, inter-partner legitimacy and capacity for joint action (e.g. Gillett *et al.*, 2016; Heinze *et al.*, 2016; Henry, 2015; Liu *et al.*, 2018; Weidner *et al.*, 2019). One of the key precursors to collaboration identified in these studies is mutual trust, shared motivation and social mission. Future research can therefore reveal the different approaches and mechanisms to build social capital and trust to identify which yield the greatest insight and strong social ties. Finally, little attention has been paid to the role of context-specific factors such as institutional conditions, policies and regulations (e.g. Jenner and Oprescu, 2016; Muñoz, 2009; Smeets, 2017; Vannebo and Grande, 2018). For example, Smeets (2017) finds that societal developments such as the changing roles of different

organisations were important in catalysing collaboration and created a supportive environment for developing a social impact bond (SIB) collaborative model in the Netherlands. Particularly, the declining role of governments in social welfare urges local governments to engage in collaboration with SEOs and search for diverse innovative collaborative models, such as SIBs. This creates future research opportunities that could scrutinise context-specific issues and contextual dynamics shaping collaboration in the context of SEOs, as it cannot be fully understood without considering the contexts in which SEOs are embedded.

The interplay of institutional logics and arising tensions in collaborations

A considerable amount of the literature, from the institutional theory perspective, relates to the interplay of multiple institutional logics and, as a result, tensions that arise in collaboration (Barinaga, 2020; Di Domenico *et al.*, 2009; Gillett *et al.*, 2016; Quélin *et al.*, 2017). This is hardly surprising, given that much scholarly attention has been devoted to the hybridity of SEOs guided by distinct and potentially contradicting institutional logics, the management of competing logics and possible tensions arising between them (Battilana and Lee, 2014; McMullen, 2018; Savarese *et al.*, 2020). Specifically, an increasing amount of research has examined how market logic leads to pressure on SEOs that may cause them to drift from their original mission and how such pressures can be mitigated (Cornforth, 2014; Quélin *et al.*, 2017). Such sociological institutional perspectives place greater importance on tensions arising from contradicting logics and how SEOs deal with these conflicting dimensions.

Different aspects of this theme have been mostly investigated within the context of social enterprises as a specific organisational form. An important finding across these studies is that social enterprises face challenges in dealing with the different institutional logics of their partners, which affects collaboration. Conflicting institutional logics may lead to the subordination of the SEOs to the for-profit partner (Huybrechts and Nicholls, 2013). The studies reveal that differences in institutional logics guiding actors can result in a conflict of logic, leading to divergent framings of social challenges (Barinaga, 2020). Furthermore, Gillett *et al.*'s (2016) study suggests that multiple institutional logics can be both a basis for collaboration and a basis for tensions due to difficulty in managing conflicting social and business logics across organisations with asymmetric power, such as smaller SEOs. Interestingly, their study illustrates how in the context of multi-organisational collaboration involving two SEOs, a local authority and a housing association, relational factors such as a sense of belonging and shared mission based on trust and commitment can lead to superior value creation and achievement of multiple objectives. For instance, in the context of social enterprise-corporate collaborations, the literature has demonstrated a paradox related to tension management within social enterprises (Savarese *et al.*, 2020). While a collaboration based on lower levels of engagement between partners reduces some of the inter-logic tensions, it is likely to compromise the organisational hybridity of social enterprises. By contrast, collaborations characterised by strong ties and stronger commitment might facilitate sustained hybridity if inter-logic tensions are managed.

Indeed, SEOs use two different approaches to design their relationships: an anthropocentric extroverted approach and a structurally integrated approach (Ostertag *et al.*, 2021). The first is characterised by the intensive use of engagement in a diverse set of partnerships simultaneously, stable and long-term relationships and strong emotional bonds, while the second is characterised by focusing on compatibility and functional integration with a few selected partners in the value co-creation process.

However, Mair's (2020) findings suggest that the assumption of competing institutional logics causing tensions may have been exaggerated and "forcefully direct(ing) attention to conflicts arising from a duality in logics" (Mair, 2020, p. 335) has led to particular theoretical

questions about how SEOs deal with conflicting logics. While much research has focused on the duality of social and commercial goals at the organisational level (Barinaga, 2020), Bacq and Lumpkin (2021, p. 287) note that scholars need "to look beyond organisational conflicts and tensions, and to consider the "bigger picture" that includes collaborations in addressing global social problems". Thus, further insights are needed into how a focus on collaborative efforts changes the nature of tensions which SEOs are subject to in collaborative settings and what strategies they employ to navigate tensions without undermining their position in collaboration and their distinctive characteristics (Bacq and Lumpkin, 2021).

The impact of collaboration on the mission of SEOs

The effect of collaboration on the mission of SEOs has also gained scholarly attention. This stream of work has broadened its scope by focusing on a potential mission drift caused by the conflicting interplay of the social and economic logics (Cornforth, 2014; Ramus and Vaccaro, 2017) to the assumption that collaboration with other organisations could be another source of mission drift (Barinaga, 2020; Savarese *et al.*, 2020). A few studies (Barinaga, 2020; Kwong *et al.*, 2017) suggest that collaboration could lead to a venture drifting away from its original mission. As outlined before, the main reason for this is a conflict in the institutional logics guiding the actors in their collaboration, that is, the institutional logic of a more powerful partner being imposed on a weaker partner. For instance, Barinaga (2020) suggests that collaborations between SEOs and the public sector are potentially volatile hybrids. Based on this, mission drift can also be defined as the co-optation of an SEO by the dominant incumbent actors. Building on the typology of collaboration types (philanthropic, transactional and integrative) suggested by Austin *et al.* (2006), research has shown that collaboration based on a lower level of engagement and interaction between partners, that is, in the philanthropic, transactional types, increases the risk of mission drift. Essentially, developing strong ties, a two-way flow of resources and skills and a stronger commitment by establishing an integrative type of collaboration minimises the risk of mission drift and allows the hybridity to be translated to the collaboration level (Savarese *et al.*, 2020).

There seems to be conflicting evidence as to whether mission drift has the inherent negative nature. For example, the findings have shown that, in some circumstances, the benefits of mission drift could exceed the mis-targeting problems they create. In exploring the impact of collective bricolage on the pursuit of SEOs' missions in resource-scarce contexts, Kwong *et al.* (2017) identified three types of mission drifts caused by collaboration. Their findings demonstrate that mission drift can also increase the overall social impact compared to situations in which partners operate separately. Thus, their study offered novel contributions to the literature by challenging the traditional view that mission drift is inherently negative. However, the authors note that the findings are limited to the UK context, which indicates that there is a need to collect empirical data from other contexts to enhance the understanding of the role of collaboration, bricolage and mission drift, which is a fruitful avenue for further research.

Therefore, it would be beneficial for future research to investigate situations in different contexts in which collaboration is combined with other resourcing practices, such as bricolage that leads to new or increased collaborations. Additionally, while mission drift may delegitimise SEOs with collaborating partners (Ramus and Vaccaro, 2017), thus undermining their willingness to collaborate with the venture, further research is needed to investigate the strategies that delegitimised SEOs adopt to capture the attention of external stakeholders.

Collaborative processes and practices for collaboration

The final theme examines collaborative processes and practices for collaboration (Barinaga, 2016, 2020; Heinze *et al.*, 2016; Smeets, 2017). Totalling just five articles, this branch of

research remains wholly underserved, limiting our understanding of the dynamic nature of collaborative processes over time and entrepreneurial "doings" for collaboration (practices). For instance, Heinze *et al.*'s (2016) study of collaborative processes provides a process model of local SE which demonstrates relationships between the mechanisms through which SEOs build a groundwork for collaboration: defining a social problem locally, developing social capital and educating partners through generating trust and helping convene partners with complementary competencies to develop solutions. By adopting a processual approach, Barinaga's (2016) study suggests the notion of "tinkering" to underscore the adaptive and fluid nature of the organisational practices and the ongoing everyday work of organising processes in social enterprises to bring about collaboration. Furthermore, in certain contexts, such as the craft sector, collaboration and sharing of various forms of capital have been embraced in response to community norms and expectations that promote socially oriented business practices (Pret and Carter, 2017). These studies highlight the collective dimension of SEOs and their findings challenge and contrast with mainstream entrepreneurship research that emphasises strategy and market-driven perspectives.

As outlined, there has been little focus on processual and practice approaches to study collaboration in the context of SEOs, recognising the embeddedness of SEOs in different contexts. Further inquiry is certainly warranted, given the emerging EaP research field (Champenois *et al.*, 2020; Thompson *et al.*, 2020), which focuses on the relational and processual nature of entrepreneurial activities as they are carried out by individuals in interactions and through practices (Gartner and Teague, 2020). As highlighted above, collaboration is a common path to resourcing SEOs and serves as an important mechanism for gaining legitimacy for social entrepreneurs and their SEOs. As such, future studies could draw on the EaP research platform and diverse interesting theories from social sciences to reveal entrepreneurial practices for collaboration and practices employed by social entrepreneurs to resource their organisations and gain legitimacy through collaborations to better understand entrepreneurs' behaviour. Thus, more research is needed to understand the resourcing process in a social entrepreneurial context through collaboration. Further research could also illuminate how SEOs manage complex relationships with their partners, the challenges that permeate the context that surrounds them, and how these organisations find ways to navigate the challenges in a collaborative setting.

Conclusion and research agenda

This SLR aimed to systematically analyse and synthesise empirical and conceptual research that focuses on the collaboration between different types of SEOs and other organisations, within and across sectors, seeking to establish further research avenues. This research is timely, as the role of collaboration in the context of SEOs has witnessed a very dynamic rise in scholarly interest. As this literature is highly fragmented and diverse, calling for further theoretical and empirical development, the main contributions of this paper lie in synthesising the extant research on collaboration in the context of SEOs, appraising the key research themes through thematic analysis and identifying relevant gaps worth investigating within each of these themes and beyond.

First, this study mapped the progress of the field over the research period (2005–2021), discussed general trends, various theories, conceptual perspectives, research contexts and methodological trends. Collaboration in the context of SEOs is a rapidly expanding area of research that has experienced increasing growth in the number of new publications in the last five years (2017–2021). This field remains overwhelmingly dominated by empirical studies conducted in Western countries, with the majority of studies coming from the UK. The review identified a limited number of studies that examined SEO collaboration in developing countries. Moreover, given the contextual intricacies of emerging market countries, there is currently a conspicuous lack of research on the rapidly growing social entrepreneurship

literature emerging from India or South America. There is also evidence indicating that research into SEO collaboration is an emerging field with predominantly exploratory qualitative studies and diverse theoretical perspectives, although institutional theory and RBV remain the most frequently used theories in studying different collaborative aspects. Considering that the studies were published in 21 different journals, the review demonstrates that this area of research is interdisciplinary and spans diverse fields of study, such as entrepreneurship and small business management, public administration, non-profit management, economics, organisation studies and sustainability.

Second, based on a thematic analysis of the literature, this review rendered some structure to the fragmented literature by identifying the five dominant research themes which have been inductively developed from the literature to understand current research and act as a guide upon which to build future research efforts. These themes include: motivations and strategies of collaboration, its antecedents, the interplay of institutional logics and tensions arising in collaboration, the impact of collaboration on the mission of SEOs and collaborative processes and practices. These themes represent dominant areas of scholarly interest in the study of collaboration in the context of SEOs. The analysis also showed a strong dominance of studies building on the fields of interorganisational collaboration, such as cross-sector partnerships and social alliances, including SEOs. Further, the review revealed that many studies take the hybridity of SEOs as a starting point to explore the influence of their conflicting institutional logics on different aspects of collaboration with diverse organisations, while there is a dearth of studies focusing on the collaborative processes and practices, which signal further potential avenues for research.

Third, based on the identified five key research themes and developmental patterns, this article develops a research agenda (see Table 2) to inspire scholars to continue conducting much-needed research in this area that is reflective of, though not necessarily limited to, the suggested directions provided below. Table 2 presents the potential research avenues and relevant research questions worthy of further investigation to move forward research on collaboration in the context of SEOs. The research questions are sufficiently broad to warrant further sharpening and focusing on future studies.

While acknowledging that work in this area is still immature, there are substantial knowledge gaps yet to be filled. There is a need for further qualitative and quantitative empirical and conceptual studies to aid the development of the theory. The use of concepts and theories from established social sciences could be fruitful in supporting such theory building. As outlined in the review, much attention has been paid to social enterprises as a particular organisational form under umbrella of SEOs. Further comprehensive examination of collaborative aspects of other organisational forms beyond social enterprises would provide invaluable insights into collaborative dynamics in the context of SEOs. Further research examining how collaboration manifests itself in the context of both nascent and mature SEOs would also make a significant contribution to current knowledge. By prolonging this line of thought, another area of research warranting wider investigation is whether particular collaborations might be effective at different points of time in the development and growth of SEOs. Additionally, the articles examined in the review highlight the paucity of longitudinal studies exploring how SEO collaboration unfolds over time. This would suggest the urgent need to dig deeper into the collaboration processes and explore how they unfold over time by employing processual and practice approaches. The review also suggests that theories such as RBV and resource dependence theory appear to be limited in their explanatory scope, in that they do not allow us to fully appreciate the richness and diversity of the entrepreneurial actions for collaboration and recognise social entrepreneuring as socially situated and socially enacted. Thus, the insights emerging from the studies suggest more research is needed into the microfoundations of collaboration in the context of SEOs as it redirects the traditional lines of inquiry in the extant literature and offers new research avenues. There is clearly a need to tell a fuller story of the

Theme	Suggestions for future research and potential research questions
Motivations and strategies	When and why do SEOs collaborate between themselves? How these collaborations shape both the SE process? To what extent are SEOs more collaborative in pursuing shared outcomes in terms of interfirm competition? How SEOs can engage in longer-term interactions with the public sector? How are these collaborations are governed and managed?
Antecedents	What are the factors and conditions for scaling up the collaborative innovative solutions and outcomes? What is the role of intermediaries (boundary spanners) in facilitating SEO collaboration? What social skills do social entrepreneurs need in order to mobilise or gain legitimacy from different stakeholders to establish new forms of collaboration? The role of emotions How do governance practices operate in a collaborative setting? How do sectoral (e.g. public, private, or third sector) cultures affect the relationship dynamics within collaborations? What are unique capabilities that SEOs lack and public actors can provide in collaborations and vice versa? Which kinds of collaborations are most effective at which point of time in the development and growth of SEOs?
The impact of collaboration on the mission of social enterprises	To what extent are missions of SEOs fluid to respond to the demands of collaborating partners? What strategies and practices do delegitimised SEOs pursue to capture the attention of potential partners for collaboration and external stakeholders? What are the sources of misalignment between SEOs' mission and mandate imposed by powerful institutional actors? To what extent does a sudden shift in societal needs expose the boundary conditions of mission drift and reveal the need for "mission agility" instead? (Bacq and Lumpkin, 2021) Do SEOs' strategies to engage in collaboration have dark sides?
The interplay of institutional logics and tensions arising in collaboration	How do SEOs employ different strategies to navigate potentially contradictory institutional logics of collaborating partners in order to facilitate social venturing? How do SEOs manage the tension of appearing hybrids while building legitimacy with established actors (for example, industry associations or public authorities)? How do SEOs resolve tensions without undermining their position in collaboration and their distinctive characteristics? How does a focus on collaborative efforts change the nature of tensions which SEOs are subject to in collaborative settings? How and when do legitimacy issues create significant obstacles to collaborative efforts with SEOs? What kind of tensions leads to the conflictive relationships between SEOs and their partners? In what ways are resulting conflicts and tensions resolvable, or if they are not resolvable, then, why? How do the various institutional factors affect the legitimacy of different forms of collaborations?

Table 2.
A research agenda for collaboration in the context of SEOs

(*continued*)

Theme	Suggestions for future research and potential research questions
Collaborative processes and practices for collaboration	How and through which practices do social entrepreneurs resource their SEOs through collaboration? How and through which practices do SEOs gain legitimacy through collaboration? It is promising to investigate how collaboration is combined with other resourcing mechanisms, like bricolage, bootstrapping leading to new or increased collaborations Acknowledging that collaboration is fluid rather than stable, taking a process and practice lens to study how collaboration unfolds (emerges, develops and changes) over time is warranted Which practices enable social entrepreneurs to manage complex relationships in a collaborative setting? Which specific practices SEOs employ to further mutual learning and experimentation though collaboration with their partners? How do SEOs extend collaborations beyond their community? How do SEOs foster and sustain collaborations after the results are achieved? A need to consider the power relationships and politics that underline how different forms of collaboration SEOs establish with other entities and how they are negotiated by both sides A need for longitudinal studies, ethnography

Table 2.

collaboration processes and entrepreneurial practices, thereby providing a more nuanced view of how SEOs enact collaboration. As collaboration is acknowledged to be a common path to resourcing SEOs, it is also believed much will be gained as studies shift their focus from the transactional exchanges and viewing resources as fixed entities and instead focus on the playing out of the relational dynamics and collective aspects of resourcing through collaboration over time.

The analysis of the articles also points to the scarcity of empirical studies on the outcomes and impacts of collaborative endeavours. Therefore, a fruitful area for future research is to assess the impact of collaborative solutions developed by SEOs and their partners. Although some studies provide some evidence of impact (Rey-García *et al.*, 2019), future research can more systematically examine the impact of different forms of collaboration in the context of SEOs. Future studies could further scrutinise different types of collaboration. For example, SIBs originating from the UK have recently received much attention in public management and administration literature as well as strategic management literature (Fraser *et al.*, 2018); however, little is known about their relationship with social entrepreneurship, their collaborative and social aspects and how such collaborative models can support and enhance collaboration between SEOs and local governments (Kosmynin and Jack, 2022). How these innovative collaborative forms apply to social entrepreneurs and SEOs has yet to be examined in the entrepreneurship literature. Moreover, future studies could pay more attention to the dark side of collaboration in the context of SEOs, as most of the studies provide a positive view of collaboration and consider mission drift as the main risk.

Another relevant question for further studies is how SEOs are in terms of practicing collaboration between themselves, especially those ones that provide similar services and products. The review demonstrates that this is an emerging line of research which deserves future scrutiny.

Practical implications

This review has important implications for social entrepreneurs and policymakers. For social entrepreneurs, the study shows that collaboration is an important mechanism by which they can resource their organisations to remain economically viable, gain legitimacy and increase their social impact. Moreover, empirical evidence indicates that long-term collaboration with diverse organisations within and across sectors is crucial for the success of SEOs. However, such collaboration requires significant investments in developing social capital, long-lasting relationships, trust and a high level of engagement to achieve societal goals. Empirical studies included in the review have revealed that the collaborations that SEOs tap into appear to be dependent on the individuals managing the collaboration, rather than on the established relationships between the organisations themselves (Gillett *et al.*, 2019; Meyskens *et al.*, 2010). Thus, social entrepreneurs who consider starting a collaboration should allocate enough time to the formation of strong ties and bonding with potential partners.

Policymakers need to develop an environment that supports the development of collaboration within and across sectors. Knowledge about the antecedents, processes, tensions and challenges that influence collaboration between SEOs and other organisations can be used by policymakers and public organisations to design interventions that assist and support social entrepreneurial activities. This could include an increased focus on developing intermediaries to connect SEOs with other organisations. Furthermore, it is believed that social investor companies might play a significant role as boundary spanners in bridging structural holes and connecting SEOs with other organisations within and across sectors (Kosmynin and Jack, 2022). Moreover, policymakers have the greatest potential to facilitate the development of regulations and initiatives that support SEO collaborations.

Limitations

Finally, this study had some limitations. First, despite extensive efforts, the literature search may have failed to capture a small handful of potentially seminal texts on collaboration in the context of SEOs. Particularly, contributions such as book chapters, conference proceedings and theses were excluded from the review in light of quality standards. Second, as only articles written in English comprised the sample, another limitation is that the studies published in other languages were excluded. Third, there is always an element of subjectivity in the thematic classification of articles which might result in potential biases. Nevertheless, to address this shortcoming, using an iterative approach helped identify the most important themes in the research on collaboration and SEOs. Fourth, a careful elaboration of the contextual differences regarding collaborations might generate interesting findings.

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Appendix

Article	Journal	Theory	Method	Country	Organisational form
Arenas *et al.* (2020)	Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly	Coopetition	Qualitative	Spain	Social enterprise
Barinaga (2016)	Organization Studies	ANT	Qualitative	Sweden	Social venture
Barinaga (2020)	VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations	Fligstein's and McAdam's theory of fields	Qualitative	Sweden	Social venture
Barraket and Loosemore (2018)	Construction Management and Economics	New institutionalist perspective	Qualitative	Australia	Social enterprise
Barth *et al.* (2015)	Entrepreneurship and Regional Development	Institutional logics	Qualitative	Australia	Social enterprise and cooperative
Chapman *et al.* (2007)	Social Enterprise Journal	Not reported	Qualitative	UK	Social enterprise
Choi (2015)	Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	Resource-based view	Quantitative	Korea	Social enterprise
de Bruin *et al.* (2016)	Entrepreneurship and Regional Development	Special issue	Special issue		Social enterprise
Di Domenico *et al.* (2009)	Organization Studies	Social exchange theory Dialectical theory	Conceptual	UK	Social enterprise
Gillett *et al.* (2016)	Public Money and Management	Institutional theory Institutional logics	Qualitative	UK	Social enterprise
Gillett *et al.* (2019)	Journal of Business Ethics	Institutional logics	Qualitative	UK	Social enterprise
Gold *et al.* (2019)	Business Strategy and the Environment	Resource-based view	Qualitative	Bangladesh	Social business
Heinze *et al.* (2016)	Nonprofit Management and Leadership	A grounded theory approach	Qualitative	US	Conversion foundations as organisational social entrepreneurs
Henry (2015)	Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	Opportunity recognition	Qualitative	UK	Social enterprise
Herbst (2019)	Business Strategy and Development	Social marketing, coopetition	Qualitative	Australia	Social enterprise
Huybrechts *et al.* (2017)	Entrepreneurship and Regional Development	Institutional theory	Qualitative	Belgium, Germany and the UK	Fair trade social enterprise

(*continued*)

Table A1. Research on collaboration in the context of SEOs

Article	Journal	Theory	Method	Country	Organisational form
Huybrechts and Nicholls (2013)	Social Enterprise Journal	Institutional theory	Qualitative	UK	Fair trade social enterprise
Intindola *et al.* (2020)	Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	A grounded theory approach	Quantitative	Mexico and US	Community foundation
Jenner and Oprescu (2016)	Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	Social capital	Mixed methods approach	Australia and Scotland	Social enterprise
Kwong *et al.* (2017)	Entrepreneurship and Regional Development	Bricolage theory Resource dependency theory Transaction cost theory	Qualitative	UK	Social enterprise, social business, public sector social enterprise
Liu *et al.* (2018)	Journal of Business Ethics	Resource-based view	Quantitative	UK	Social enterprise
Maase and Bossink (2010)	Journal of Enterprising Communities	Not reported	Qualitative	The Netherlands	Social enterprise
McDermott *et al.* (2018)	Journal of Cleaner Production	Opportunity recognition, discovery and creation (in social enterprise collaborations)	Qualitative	Canada	Social enterprise
Meyskens *et al.* (2010)	Entrepreneurship and Regional Development	Population ecology, resource dependency and resource-based view	Qualitative	US	Social venture
Mitzinneck and Besharov (2019)	Journal of Business Ethics	Institutional theory	Qualitative	Germany	Cooperative
Montgomery *et al.* (2012)	Journal of Business Ethics	Collective action	Conceptual		Social venture
Muñoz and Tinsley (2008)	The Journal of Corporate Citizenship	A grounded theory approach	Qualitative	UK	Social enterprise
Muñoz (2009)	Social Enterprise Journal	Not reported	Qualitative	UK	Social enterprise
Ostertag *et al.* (2021)	Journal of Business Research	Relational view	Qualitative	Germany	Social enterprise
Pret and Carter (2017)	Entrepreneurship and Regional Development	Bourdieu's theory of practice Embeddedness	Qualitative	UK	Craft entrepreneurs, social enterprise
Quélin *et al.* (2017)	Journal of Management Studies	Hybridity	Conceptual/ Special issue		Social enterprise

(*continued*)

Table A1.

Article	Journal	Theory	Method	Country	Organisational form
Rey-García *et al.* (2019)	Management Decision	Resource-based view Relational view of competitive advantage	Qualitative	Spain	Social enterprise
Sakarya *et al.* (2012)	Journal of Business Research	Systems approach	Qualitative	Turkey	Social enterprise
Savarese *et al.* (2020)	Journal of Business Ethics	Institutional logics Organisational hybridity	Conceptual		Social enterprise
Simmons (2008)	Public Policy and Administration	Not reported	Qualitative	UK	Social enterprise
Smeets (2017)	Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	Collaborative governance	Qualitative	The Netherlands	Social enterprise
Smith *et al.* (2014)	Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	Identity-based perspective	Conceptual		Social venture
Tracey *et al.* (2005)	Journal of Business Ethics	Not reported	Conceptual	UK	Community enterprise
Vannebo and Grande (2018)	International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business	Embeddedness	Qualitative	Norway	Social venture
Weidner *et al.* (2019)	Business and Society	Institutional theory	Quantitative	Worldwide	Social enterprise

Table A1.

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PAPER 4. Alternative investing as brokering: The embedding process of a Social Impact Bond model in a local context

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Alternative investing as brokering: The embedding process of a Social Impact Bond model in a local context

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ABSTRACT

Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) are gaining traction as a research topic. Using a longitudinal case study of a Norwegian social venture - Nature Magic - funded through a SIB model, this article explores the embedding process of a SIB model into a local context – diverging from previous research focused on empirical cases from the UK and USA and refining the social aspects of SIBs. We show that the SIB model is embedded through three processes: 1) cultivating opportunity; 2) pulling together; and 3) fostering experimentation and 'mutation'. We find that these embedding processes were fostered through developing and activating bonding and bridging social capital. This study also extends our understanding of alternative investing by theorizing it as brokering. We find that social investors engage in brokering processes in facilitating collaboration between typically disconnected spheres - such as social ventures and municipalities - through these embedding processes.

1. Introduction

A growing number of social ventures are working collaboratively with other organizations within and across sectors (de Bruin et al., 2017; Kimmitt and Muñoz, 2018; Mair, 2020). Understanding the nature of such collaborative efforts is important if we are to build a social and solidarity economy that can accommodate the complex nature of social problems (Bacq and Lumpkin, 2021; Quélin et al., 2017). This includes collaborations with government organizations and others engaged in enabling public services to innovate and change as social ventures generate new innovative solutions (Günzel-Jensen et al., 2020; McNamara et al., 2018).

Simultaneously, we have seen a rise in diverse innovative collaborative forms for public service delivery, including social ventures (Fraser et al., 2018) and alternative models of investment targeting social ventures (Bruton et al., 2015; Mayer and Scheck, 2018). One collaboration model is Social Impact Bonds (SIBs), marked by their co-creative and collaborative processes for creating synergies between public entities, social ventures, and (social) investors (FitzGerald et al., 2020; Ormiston et al., 2020). By leveraging private social investment to meet the upfront costs of certain welfare services, SIBs provide a unique alternative investment model that allows governing bodies to reimburse investors for better social outcomes (Muñoz and Kimmitt, 2019).

Emerging research on SIBs can be divided into three streams of literature. One stream reflects on SIBs as a market form of service delivery aligned with a 'pro-market discipline' (Arena et al., 2016; Carter, 2021; Harvie and Ogman, 2019). A second stream takes a more cautious stance, problematizing SIBs as win-win-win solutions for governments, service providers and investors, and portraying

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investors as rentiers (McHugh et al., 2013; Neyland, 2018). A third stream offers a different perspective by theorizing the collaborative processes of SIBs (Smeets, 2017) and suggesting that SIBs are collaborations embedded within networks of actors (Andersen et al., 2020; Mollinger-Sahba et al., 2021; Williams, 2020).

The literature emphasizes social capital as a crucial aspect of networks and embedding (Vannebo and Grande, 2018). Social entrepreneurs work to develop relationships for collaboration by building new ties and bridging diverse social groups, building social capital in the process (Estrin et al., 2013). Social capital – a relational artefact – creates a condition for the effective exchange of information and resources (Jack and Anderson, 2002; Anderson et al., 2007). Prior relationships are considered important because they provide an embedding mechanism (Pret and Carter, 2017) but also lead to the creation of social capital (Vestrum, 2014). The bridging and bonding forms of social capital offer different advantages. Bonding social capital is "inward looking and tends to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups" (Putnam, 2000, p. 22). At the same time, it also offers structure to the network through the creation and cementing of social relationships (Anderson and Jack, 2002). Bridging social capital, on the other hand, offers heterogeneity to the network and the opportunity to connect to people or groups that are different from each other and therefore provide a link to resources that lie in other social structures (Putnam, 2000; Agnitsch et al., 2006).

Although the literature has started exploring different mechanisms for integrating SIBs into local contexts (Andersen et al., 2020; Lowe et al., 2019), empirical studies of how and in what contexts such investments can support collaboration between social ventures and local governments are rare (FitzGerald et al., 2020; Muñoz and Kimmitt, 2019). Studies have examined SIBs in the UK and US contexts (Neyland, 2018; Tan et al., 2021), despite their proliferation in other contexts which are not perceived to be fertile for such models (Andersen et al., 2020; Broom, 2021). This has left a significant gap in understanding the collaborative aspects of SIBs in other settings. Through a longitudinal case study of the social venture Nature Magic funded through the SIB model in Norway, we provide further insight into this nascent area of research by asking: *What are the embedding processes of a collaborative SIB model in a local context?*

2. Material and methods

2.1. Contextualizing a SIB under investigation

The Norwegian welfare state is characterized by a comprehensive social policy and universalist orientation, implying that public services are 'at the heart of the state'. As a core welfare provider, municipalities are an integral part of the Norwegian welfare state, and thus their 'municipalization' plays a crucial role in providing services (Vike, 2018). Local governments, however, are facing an ever-growing number of complex social problems, as well as significant resource constraints, raising demands and expectations for innovation, experimentation, and a need for greater collaboration between fields of professional expertise and sectors (Kobro et al., 2018).

This study investigates a small social venture - Nature Magic - funded through a SIB model to deliver services to Rock municipality which faced increasing school dropouts. The venture focuses on the well-being of different groups of people struggling to cope with stress in their everyday lives. Rock municipality decided to strengthen its prevention services for young people through collaboration with Nature Magic; however such experimentation was costly to the municipality. Nature Magic had a pre-existing relationship through their start-up with a social investor company Anders Capital, which invests in social entrepreneurs, and suggested they opt for collaboration. In view of the numerous years of experience of the investor company, Nature Magic was funded through a hybrid SIB model, with the agreement to partner for 3 years (see Appendix A).

2.2. Research design

In line with our focus on social practices and processes in a local context (see Chatterjee et al., 2021; Vanderhoven et al., 2020), we adopted a longitudinal single-case study design (Patton, 2002). The qualitative case study approach provided us with rich, contextualized, and longitudinal data. As such, we could gain a nuanced understanding of practices and processes of embedding the SIB into the local context. One member of the research team collected data between 2019 and 2020 through interviews, observations, and documents. Table A1 provides a detailed summary of the data collected and its role in the research process. This mix of data enabled data triangulation, while the constant comparative method guided data collection and analysis (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2018; Glaser, 1978).

2.3. Data collection

2.3.1. Interview data

Purposive sampling (Denzin, 1989; Pratt, 2009) was used to recruit critical players involved in the collaboration process: two (co) founders of the social venture, the Managing Director of the social investor-company, and municipals, ensuring multiple perspectives were captured to achieve theoretical density (Anderson et al., 2010). We were able to collect real-time data and diminish retrospective bias by interviewing participants as the SIB unfolded. In total, the lead author conducted seven semi-structured interviews at different periods of time, each lasting between 45 min and 2 h in two rounds of data collection with one of the (co)founders and the social investor. The interviews allowed for open-ended discussions about the key actors' experiences and the meanings attached to these experiences (McCracken, 1988). The follow up interviews enabled us to revisit emergent themes for fuller explanations. The lead author facilitated conversation-like interviews following an interpretivist approach, giving respondents considerable space and freedom to co-create and extend the discussion. The interview guide was adjusted and questions adapted for the three organizations. All interviews were recorded with the permission of respondents and transcribed verbatim. Most interviews were at respondents' premises. Due to the travel restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, two interviews were arranged via video conference and

video recorded. The researcher also engaged in informal conversations (for example, in a car, via email) with the founders of Nature Magic to generate a better understanding of what was going on as the collaboration unfolded.

2.3.2. Observation data and documents

The researcher was also granted access to attend and observe working group meetings in situ and accompany the social entrepreneurs on their trips to the Rock municipality. The researcher took detailed field notes on meetings, participant behaviors and informal conversations and made audio recordings when possible. Specifically, the field researcher 'zoomed in' on how micro-interactions between diverse participants played out in context and place, the surrounding conditions, and other contextual factors (Jack, 2005; Van Burg et al., 2020). Written consent was obtained from all participants, who were informed of the study's background and purpose. To further enrich the data, the researchers also collected and analyzed documentary sources, which are listed in Table A1. Organizations, names and locations are anonymized throughout the article.

Table A1
A detailed summary of the data collected

Data type	Source	Amount	Further details	Use in analysis
Interviews	Social entrepreneurs (2 (co)founders)	3	An interview with the founder *before the evaluation of short-term results* (from pupils and teachers), June 2020 A follow up interview with the (co)founder and interview with the second founder *after the evaluation* of short-term results, November 2020	Provided insight into key actors' everyday lived experiences with collaboration; the detailed account of activities involved in embedding the SIB model and the ways they navigated the challenges
	Managing Director of the social investor company	2	Interview with the key actor from the social investor company, June 2020 A follow up interview, August 2020	
	Municipal employees	2	Interview with a chief executive officer for childcare, July 2020 Interview with a school advisor, November 2020 Around 9 h 40 min in total	
Observations	Conference	1	November 2019 Presentation of the SIB model at the Annual Social Entrepreneurship Conference 4 month after the contract was signed 5 h	Provided insight into key actors' experiences with collaboration before the evaluation of short-term results (2–3 month after Nature Magic started the delivery of services)
	Working group meetings	2	Observations took place an the Rock municipality's premises after the evaluation of short-term results, November 2020 5 h	Provided access to participants and allowed in situ observation of interaction dynamics naturally occurring in meetings; provided insight into challenges faced by key actors, in the moment, as the embedding process unfolded; allowed for contextualizing the study
	Informal activities	2	The lead author took part in informal activities, such as coffee breaks and observed two (co) founders preparing for the meeting with the Rock municipality and discussing the results of the meeting, and engaged in informal conversations with them in a car	Provided insight into social entrepreneurs' experiences with collaborations and challenges, deepening understanding of process in context
Documents	SIB contract	1	A signed SIB contract	Allowed for contextualizing the study, provided insight into details about the risk-reward profile, evaluation approach, etc. and helped to avoid retrospective bias
	Letter of intent	1	A letter of intent to sign a SIB contract	
	PowerPoint Presentations	3	Presentations of the SIB model before the contract was signed and after	
	Annual report	1	Access to the annual report produced by the social investor company	
	Press reports	8	Press coverage of the SIB model	
	Policy document	1	The rejection letter about the potential implementation of SIBs from one of the Norwegian municipalities	

2.4. Data analysis

Data were imported into the MAXQDA software program, enabling efficient organizing and coding of data. We used an inductive qualitative approach to analyze the data, iterating between our data and the literature as analysis progressed (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Gioia et al., 2012). During the first phase, transcribed interviews along with collated field notes, observation guides and archival data were synthesized and then organized around themes that fitted our interests. Then, we identified initial concepts in the data and grouped them into categories. In this first-order stage of analysis, we identified 14 categories. During the second phase, we engaged in axial coding and searched for connections which allowed us to group the categories into 7 higher-order themes. In the final phase, we ordered similar themes into four overarching 'aggregate dimensions' that represented conceptually coherent constructs and included representative quotations from the raw data (Table A2). Following the constant comparative approach (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2018;

Glaser, 1978), the analytic process was iterative as we moved between data and theory. Our choice of analytic method was largely informed by studies using the constant comparative approach to relate contexts and entrepreneurial actions (McKeever et al., 2015). Fig. 1 provides details on the progression from first-order coding to second-order themes (Gioia et al., 2012), which then generate aggregate understandings of the embedding process of the SIB into the local context.

Table A2
Representative evidence

1st order concepts	2nd order themes and examples	Aggregate dimensions
	Expressing openness to new solutions and collaboration	
Gaining support from investor	**Managing Director, Anders Capital**: "I believe it was the guys from Nature Magic who saw the possibility for dragging into this collaboration with Rock municipality […] so they have attacked us asking if we want to join in to realize this collaboration in Rock municipality. So it was easy to say okey 'that this is a concept that, we believe, has a right intake for the municipality''	**Cultivating opportunity**
	Managing Director, Anders Capital: "And for us it was like, okay, if this is the thing that they can measure concretely and are really into, we have to go with it''	
	Observation: Answering the question posed from the audience why Rock municipality decided to test the services instead of implementing them as they had been successfully tested in another X municipality, the chief executive officer for childcare from Rock municipality replied: "When Nature Magic knocked on our door and said they had successfully tested their services in X municipality, we were extremely interested but we did not have money for that, so we needed much time to find a financial solution and the *social investor* played a critical role in making this collaboration a reality'' (Conference)	
	Archival data (PowerPoint presentation): 1,5 mln is a gift from the social investor company Anders Capital	
Introducing new actors and impulses for innovation from outside	**Municipal employee, Rock municipality**: "It was Nature Magic who took contact with us and presented their profile and what they are doing […] we had much contact for a long time before we signed a contract. It is very important to have a close contact''	
	Cofounder, Nature Magic: "They really needed and wanted our services but they could not afford them. So that's where it started''	
	Municipal employee, Rock municipality: "We must also get impulses from outside. It is not the case that we are sitting with the best solutions''	
	Observation: "The public sector cannot solve everything […] We need to do it with other actors, so we need to enact collaborations […] and collaborations are about having the same values'' (Conference)	
	Creating a space for experimentation with a SIB model	
Monitoring SIB development and waiting in the wings to pull in a SIB in a local context	**Managing Director, Anders Capital:** "We have known about that concept for a long time […] we have been following it as it evolved in Europe and discussing what kind position it should have in Norway, and whether there are any possibilities with these kind of contracts here. And I've been very reluctant for a lot of years in taking this to Norway mainly because of the municipalities''	
	Observation: The representatives of Anders Capital travelled twice to Scotland to learn their experience in implementing SIBs	
Carving out a space and possibilities for new collaboration models	**Managing Director, Anders Capital:** "But then the last few years we have seen a movement amongst municipalities […] the economy in the municipalities is tightening up, it is demanded more of them and they do not get that much money so the *mindset is slowly changing*''	
	Cofounder, Nature Magic: "The social investor said 'okay, we could take the risk under a special kind of contract'. It is something they wanted to try out in Norway at this point. So we are very late in using this model […] it was something completely new […] and we asked the investor what they want from us to implement this and they said 'we want you to measure the impact' and we knew that we would manage this''	
	Observation: During the conversations the key stakeholders often emphasized that it is a win-win-win collaboration model	
	Bonding of social capital	
Cultivating the mutual trust	**Cofounder, Nature Magic**: "I think the most important value in this project is trust and it was established before Anders Capital came in''	**Pulling together**
	Municipal employee, Rock municipality: "Such collaboration is too dependent on individuals and relations between them. When we met guys from Nature Magic, we developed trust and established relationships […] it is of great importance that we can rely on each other''	
	Managing Director, Anders Capital: "I think it is really difficult to do a contract like this if you do not match with the partners around the table but we did. On the personal level we built trust and we trusted them really well after a while in the working group''	
	Municipal employee, Rock municipality: "We do a background check. We	

(*continued on next page*)

Table A2 (*continued*)

1st order concepts	2nd order themes and examples	Aggregate dimensions
	wanted to know why they (investor) are concerned with this, to understand their motivation to join collaboration. If their intention was to make money, then we would not be able to take as much out of it. We spent very much time on getting to know each other''	
	Observation: Hugging while greeting each other. During the meetings, social entrepreneurs constantly emphasized the importance of building trust and be in a close dialogue with those Rock employees who will become mentors and develop solutions further.	
	Observation: The participants stressed that a key success factor in the collaboration has been mutual trust and shared value-based goals for what they want to achieve together in the SIB (conference)	
Gaining from pre-existing relationships	**Managing Director, Anders Capital**: "So when they came to us, we were definitely positive and curious because we knew the social entrepreneur very well from the start-up''	
	Managing Director, Anders Capital: "They established a dialogue themselves and they knew that they like each other and that they wanted to collaborate […] and it has saved a lot of time for us in a sense that they came not with a complete package but at least they have done that first important step''	
	Building on common interest	
Being driven by the same social goals	**Managing Director, Anders Capital**: "And the things we have presented to them as our interests matched really well with what they were trying to achieve''	
	Municipal employee, Rock municipality: "It was important for us that they have had such an extensive experience and their mission is to contribute back to society''	
	Managing Director, Anders Capital: "When we met with the municipality, I think they were probably the most nervous part around the table because to them we as an investor were a private company so I think they were quite surprised to find that we have such clear social goals […] and for us that was of course important because what we feared the most is that people think that we are there with *a double agenda*''	
	Observation: Open communication and dialogue	
Enjoying shared values, motivation and togetherness	**Municipal employee, Rock municipality**: "When developing a SIB contract, we had shared collaborative values and motivation. It was not an order-performer model, it was a *collaboration model* developed together. It is important that we've developed it *together* and are developing it all the way''	
	Managing Director, Anders Capital: "I think they quite quickly could feel that okey these guys are actually in it, they are as intrigued as we are in being able to do this''	
	Observation: During the meetings, the key players were highlighting that they are together 'on the same journey'. A friendly atmosphere during the meetings. Joking.	
	Reconfiguring a traditional SIB model	
Integrating new services and ways of working	**Managing Director, Anders Capital**: "This is a concept that has a right intake for the municipality, which means it is a low risk because the idea was to implement this inside the municipality which means that we do not have a situation where the municipality has to buy, buy and buy […] that is what municipalities are reluctant to do because they get dependent, right' (laughing)?''	**Fostering experimentation and 'mutation'**
	Municipal employee, Rock municipality: "The idea that we are not obliged to buy services in the future and will acquire new competences served as a very important starting point. It is crucial that we do not have to buy services all the time. We have our employees who can do it further''	
	Archival data (PowerPoint presentation): The collaborative SIB model is ***just*** a tool to achieve a goal but, in our case, landing on a hybrid SIB model was *critical* in achieving that goal.	
	Archival data (PowerPoint presentation): If the results are achieved, Rock municipality is obliged to sustain the services internally.	
Pushing municipality to revisit their goals	**Managing Director, Anders Capital**: "I think during the discussions the municipality was surprised to feel that we were pushing them to think about what they as a municipality want to achieve […] they thought they would strengthen the target group and it fitted nicely as being active and innovative but what concrete actions would come out of it in terms what we change was not there''	
	Municipal employee, Rock municipality: "We discussed together what we want to achieve together concretely and how we are going to measure the effect. […] it was a very challenging part for us before signing the contract''	
	Reshaping practices	
Creating space for innovation and experimentation	**Municipal employee, Rock municipality**: "Nature Magic's solution and services are very unique so we want our employees to learn how to provide	

(*continued on next page*)

Table A2 (*continued*)

1st order concepts	2nd order themes and examples	Aggregate dimensions
	them'' **Municipal employee, Rock municipality**: "It is a completely new way of doing work and we are doing really smart things'' **Observation**: During internal meetings conversations were often focused on how innovative the work is, how challenging it is and that they are on 'the same innovation journey' **Archival data (letter of intent)**: Rock municipality is intending to sign a hybrid SIB contract with Nature Magic and Anders Capital. The model is a mix of Social Impact Bond and Social Bridging Finance […] where the public sector takes over the funding if the pre-defined results are achieved. **Observation**: "The contract says that it is possible to make changes and adjustments along the way, because it is very important to be able to be *flexible* in those contracts'' (Conference) **Observation:** The project was constantly updated and changed based on member suggestions (e.g. related to impact measurement, communication) **Observation**: Nature Magic has developed its own evaluation procedure besides impact measurement metrics used as they found questionnaires to be challenging for pupils to answer	
	Orchestrating cultural and social capital	
Gaining from prior work experience in the government	**Managing Director, Anders Capital**: "I used to be politician so I know politics and how things are done out there. It is a very good background to have because you have to understand the mindset on the governmental or the municipality side. If not, you would probably not get that trust around the table, at least, not that quickly''	**Leveraging a brokerage role**
	Managing Director, Anders Capital: "I think they (the Rock municipality) were really surprised to see our great insights into how municipalities work […] when we arrived and told them about our extensive years of experience in doing SE and that I worked in the Government for many years and I was a politician on the side […] so I kind of know the environment, I know the constraints and strengths they have, and the mindset in a way''	
Using professional knowledge about the public sector realities	**Managing Director, Anders Capital**: "It is not always the best thing to start in the Parliament […] I have learnt a lot about that when it comes to social innovations. If you get to the top and they say and instruct people to do social innovations, 'aaaa' (laughing), this does not work'' (Managing Director, Anders Capital)	
	Managing Director, Anders Capital: "It is so interesting what is happening in the governmental sector when it comes to social innovation […] how they grasp new ideas when they see them out there and they try to make it public but it is not that easy. Do you know about the attempts in the government to set up the SIB? Because it has been going on for years (laughing) […] They do not understand what SIB is about, they do not understand the private role in SIB […] and do not leave any room for a social investor''	
	Managing Director, Anders Capital: "It is really hard for municipalities to gather data from their own silos and not the least try to find the numbers to paint a full picture..it is almost impossible''	
	Connecting	
Facilitating collaboration	**Managing Director, Anders Capital**: "It is another part of our goal - we are not going to earn money on doing SIBs but we hope to be able to use them to start collaborations between social entrepreneurs and municipalities because they find it really hard''	
	Managing Director, Anders Capital: "What we have been trying to teach the municipalities about is that they need a contract with a social entrepreneur which is as accurate and as good as with the private company, because they are actually a company''	
	Managing Director, Anders Capital: "To us that is really a test, it is not whether we will manage to measure that the things are going better. It is for the guys (social entrepreneurs) to be able to teach the municipality the way to do this. And actually if they manage this, it will be crucial for all parties. That is what we want out of it''	
	Managing Director, Anders Capital: "We had to involve a third party, a consultancy company working with social innovation in Norway. And it was very critical, because they could put in the hours to sit and work on the contract, the wording and all those pieces. And that is actually an expensive part […] and we have not included that in the contract, we did for free […] And so far the municipalities are quite reluctant to pay for that kind of stuff: all hours and efforts''	
	Managing Director, Anders Capital: 'Hopefully some of such SIB contracts and ways of working with us can help the municipality also to start thinking in another way when it comes to their own projects, collaborations with social ventures and how they work. I've seen many great innovative projects in	

(*continued on next page*)

Table A2 (*continued*)

1st order concepts	2nd order themes and examples	Aggregate dimensions
	Norway and after three years they end. And it is kind of terrible to see all those projects just ending … everybody agreeing 'this is a much better way of working.. bye bye'. That is totally crazy. At least it is where my heart'' **Managing Director, Anders Capital:** "For us as a social investor at least it is important to be able to shed some light on that situation that by going in with 1 or 2 millions, we can make a difference in the municipality […] which is crazy, crazy bananas when you see all the millions they have but cannot move one million from that budget to this budget'' **Observation:** The social investor company was pushing Rock municipality to think thoroughly about what they want to achieve in this collaboration **Observation:** The social investor company have created 'the steering group' and 'the working group', both facilitated the embedding process of the SIB model (Conference, meetings) **Observation**: The participants emphasized that the project would never be successful without 'the working group' **Observation**: The social investor company urged the municipality and the social venture to think thoroughly how to track the experiences of future mentors (teachers) who are supposed to deliver the services in Rock municipality after the pilot trial. The actors discussed different formats how to check that with both pupils and teachers. **Archival data (social venture company's website)**: We will continue to organize regional meetings across Norway to facilitate collaboration between municipalities and social entrepreneurs.	

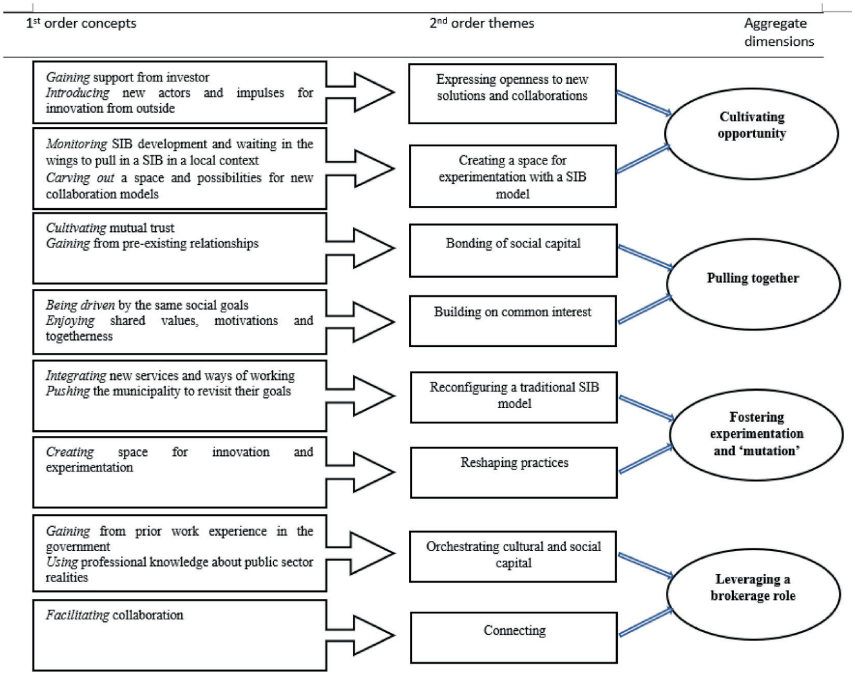

Fig. 1. Data structure.

3. Results

Our data reveal three major insights. First, three processes were enacted to embed a context-sensitive hybrid SIB model into a local context which we label as *cultivating opportunity*, *pulling together* and *fostering experimentation and 'mutation'*. Second, these embedding processes were fostered by *developing and activating bonding social capital*. Third, through these embedding processes, the social investor leveraged a *bridging role* to bring together and connect the social venture and municipality by engaging in *brokering processes*. We present a discussion of our key findings in the following sub-sections.

3.1. Cultivating opportunity

The findings show that the social investor exerted an important role in facilitating the spread of the SIB model to Norway. Despite the rapid proliferation of SIBs in the UK and US and their mobility to other geographical contexts (Andersen et al., 2020), the investor expressed reluctance about taking this model to Norway for many years mainly because of contextual intricacies marked by bureaucratic administration in municipalities and resistance to private actors in the welfare provision. Over the last 10 years, the investor's position was "let's wait and see how the things develop" (Social investor).

However, local government budget tightening, spending cuts, increasing demands, and high expectations meant a movement among municipalities was being witnessed, "their mindset is slowly changing and we thought that it is the right time to do the SIB" (Social investor). The embedding process of the SIB must therefore be placed within the context of these ongoing changes which fueled interest in social innovations and were instrumental to the investor's decision to seize the opportunity to see how this model works in a local setting, thus *creating a space for experimentation with a SIB model* that fostered the introduction of new practices within all key organizations involved in the SIB development.

Rock municipality's limited budget for experimentation with 'innovative and unique' services created an opportunity for the social venture to gain support from the investor-company by securing funding: "They (Rock municipality) really needed and wanted our services but they could not afford them […], then the investor came along". The idea for introducing a SIB model in this context was conceived by the investor as Rock municipality, through its strong commitment to providing good quality services for local residents, sought to introduce new impulses for innovation to their services and invite new actors such as social ventures by *expressing openness to new solutions and collaboration.*

When carving out a space and possibilities for the SIB*,* data also shows that the investor viewed the 'right match' of the social venture and their capacity as a service provider to measure the results as a low risk to develop this kind of model (Muñoz and Kimmitt, 2019). As the social entrepreneur noted: "We asked the investor what they require from us to implement this model and they said they want us to measure the impact […] that was okay because we've done it for years, we would manage this". While the investor envisaged developing the first SIB model, further processes were required to embed the model into the local context.

3.2. Pulling together

In our findings, we noted the importance of pre-existing relationships between Rock municipality and the social venture. In the early stages especially, this brought a foundation of trust in each other's intentions and goals and gave the partners credibility with each other. During the initiation of the project, the pre-existing ties were especially important for the investor-company and saved time during the negotiation process: "They established a dialogue themselves and knew that they liked and trusted each other […], at least they have done the first step […], without that it would have taken much more time" (Social investor). We also saw in our case that the activation of pre-existing ties between the investor and the social venture formed during the venture's startup were a catalyst enabling the investor to perceive the social entrepreneurs as trustworthy and reliable.

While the investor acknowledged how the pre-existing ties contributed to the speed of the project development, further activities were required such as getting to know the municipality and cultivating mutual trust and reinforcing collaboration through the *bonding of social capital.* During the very first meetings with Rock municipality, the investor witnessed that municipal employees were the most nervous around the table, Anders Capital is a private company: "What we feared the most is that people think that we are there with a double *agenda*" (Social investor). However, to address these liabilities, the investor-company representatives fostered activities to achieve the feeling of belonging and worked to cultivate mutual trust. This happened primarily through the introduction of the investor's extensive work experience with social entrepreneurship and signaling their clear social goals. A "contributing back to society'' (Municipal employee) investor mission was particularly valued by the municipal administrative employees as it suggested the importance of *building on common interest* and "matched really well with what they were trying to achieve" (Social investor).

This building on common interest, combined with the proactive bonding of social capital, allowed all three parties to interact more openly with each other, and reinforced the program development: "It was not an order-performer model, it was a *collaboration model* […] it is very important that we've developed it together and are developing it all the way" (Municipal employee).

3.3. Fostering experimentation and 'mutation'

Having developed mutual trust and created a shared vision, the parties engaged in the process of fostering experimentation and 'mutation' (Broom, 2021) by *reconfiguring a traditional SIB model* and, thereby, *reshaping practices*. Following Broom (2021), we describe 'mutation' as the alterations and twists made to the typical SIB model.

Rock municipality sought to *sustain* services provided by the social venture through acquiring new competencies and staff training

which "served as a very important starting point for collaboration" (Municipal employee). This idea was consistent with the aims of an alternative model called Social Bridging Finance (SBF) - trialed in Scotland – to sustain services in case of a successful trial phase (Social Bridging Finance, 2020). As both the municipality and investor-company were averse to the potential municipality's dependence on the service provider after the SIB trial, the investor made a pledge to the project and fostered reconfiguring a traditional SIB model: "This is a concept that has a right intake for the municipality […] we do not have a situation where the municipality has to buy, buy and buy […] that is what municipalities are reluctant to do because they get dependent" (Social investor). We identify this as a particular issue in Norway, where our empirical material was collected and where there is a tendency towards minimizing long-term public sector dependence on private service providers. The investor also encouraged the municipality and Nature Magic to increase the number of teachers to be trained as municipalities often underestimate how many employees change jobs. Thus, by proactively refining the contours of the SIB model, such 'mutation' caused the ideals of SBF to be incorporated into the SIB model, resulting in a hybrid model.

We further observed that the constant monitoring of measurable outcomes and the introduction of financial metrics, as well as services provided by the social venture induced changes in practices within Rock municipality by reshaping their organizational practices (Schildt et al., 2021). This was notably visible during internal meetings when conversations were often focused on how innovative and challenging the work is, and that they are on 'the same innovation journey'. This demonstrates that such experimentation with the collaboration model introduced an innovative addition and 'entrepreneurial approach' to the municipality.

3.4. Leveraging a brokerage role

Our findings extend current understandings of the social investor's role in the SIB. What we saw was the importance of the investor's insights into the municipalities' mindset and the way they are organized for embedding a SIB model in a local context. Before joining Anders Capital, the Managing Director benefitted from extensive work experience in the Norwegian government as a politician. This ensured awareness of public sector norms and knowledge about 'how things work' in this particular research setting. By *orchestrating cultural and social capital*, the Managing Director legitimized the investor-company within the public sector and leveraged a brokerage and bridging role to get new things done (Burt, 2005; Halevy et al., 2019; Stovel and Shaw, 2012) through *connecting* the municipality and the social venture, thereby laying the groundwork for embedding the SIB and facilitating beneficial social processes. Our findings show that the social investor engaged in brokering processes using the SIB model to help social ventures establish collaborations with municipalities. Key brokering activities were coordinating the set-up process by working with the specialized company to draw up a detailed SIB contract and to form a 'steering group' and 'working group'. During the collaboration, we observed that the social investor underlined the importance of recruiting more teachers from the municipality who were supposed to sustain services, as well as facilitate the discussions on how to design questionnaires so that young people could respond to them and how to check the experiences of teachers in training. Our observations also revealed that the social investor company was concerned that the municipality was not able to trace the different pupils, their childcare authorities, and families to gain a bigger picture because of the current legislation regarding access to personal information.

4. Discussion and conclusion

We contribute to the emerging literature on SIBs by providing a longitudinal and contextually situated account of the embedding processes of the SIB model into a local context. The longitudinal nature of our study allowed us to capture the activities involved in SIB development over time and to generate an informed understanding of how these underpinned the collaboration process. While our results support previous findings that SIBs can differ significantly across contexts (Andersen et al., 2020; Broom, 2021), what we saw in our case was that the SIB model was hybridized by incorporating an important element of SBF. Our findings show that the main goal and incentive was to ensure that the municipality internally *sustains* those services which successfully meet agreed outcomes by municipal employees who received training from the social venture. We contribute to previous research on alternative investment (Agrawal and Hockerts, 2021; Wilson et al., 2020) by highlighting the role of social capital in SIB development and, more broadly, in alternative investment (Colombo et al., 2015). We theorize the embedding processes as being fostered through developing and activating bonding social capital which is crucial for successful collaboration and the bridging element of social capital (Jack and Anderson, 2002). The study also highlights the value of cultural and social capital that is accumulated by social investors through their prior work experience within government and its importance for legitimizing the investor company within the public sector.

Further, our study extends understanding of alternative investing by viewing it as brokering, thereby providing a greater nuance to what social investors do in SIBs. Most of the current literature takes a critical position and asserts that SIBs allow private investors to profit from social problems and that investors are removed from social problems, thus portraying them negatively due to financialization of the social sector and profiteering (Neyland, 2018; Williams, 2020). In contrast, we found that the social investor played a brokerage role by fostering relationships and facilitating collaboration between social ventures and municipalities through embedding the SIB model. These findings show how the investor engaged in brokering processes to assist the parties in navigating challenges as the collaboration unfolded. Therefore, we build on prior literature on brokering (Burt, 2005; Halevy et al., 2019; Lingo & O'Mahony, 2010) and the bridging (Putnam, 2000; Agnitsch et al., 2006) aspect of social capital and demonstrate that social investors serve as a unique link and catalyst for municipalities and social ventures to collaborate. In doing so, our study addresses calls for empirical studies that examine how alternative investments, such as SIBs, can help local governments and social ventures to collaborate (Andersen et al., 2020; FitzGerald et al., 2020). Finally, this article contributes empirically to the literature by extending our understanding of SIBs in new contexts (Andersen et al., 2020).

As we focused on a single case study, we cannot rule out the possibility that our research setting might have affected the embedding

processes we observed. Therefore, we recommend caution when generalizing our findings to other settings. Despite these caveats, our study provides merits to further explore the role of different alternative investment instruments in facilitating collaboration between social ventures and public sector organizations across different contexts.

Credit author statement

Mikhail Kosmynin: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing – original draft. Sarah L. Jack: Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Writing – original draft.

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Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Appendix A. Key aspects of the hybrid SIB model

Key aspects of the hybrid SIB model.

The SIB is a 3-year (2019–2022) pilot program that has short-term and long-term goals: 1) to improve the well-being of pupils, their motivation, and reduce the level of stress; and 2) reduce school dropouts in the long run. The project is implemented by the social investor company Anders Capital, the social venture Nature Magic, and the Rock municipality, thus bringing three organizations together. Anders Capital provided upfront funding to Nature Magic to deliver the program and train teachers from the Rock municipality who are supposed to sustain the services which successfully meet agreed outcomes.

The pilot of the program started in September 2019, with Nature Magic delivering services and training teachers as internal mentors for two years (2019–2021). Rock municipality commits to sustaining the services internally starting from the fall of 2022, as well as repaying Anders Capital 50% of the investment if the short-term results are achieved (25% of the investment are paid back if the short-term goal is achieved and another 25% if the long-term goal is achieved). In case of poor performance, Rock municipality does not have any financial obligations to repay anything back. The evaluation process includes a questionnaire developed for pupils in order to determine whether the short-term outcomes have been achieved and an observation of actual school dropouts where there should be at least a 20% reduction in school dropouts in the group participating in the program.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Interview guide – social ventures

Part 1. General questions about organization and respondent

Tell me please about yourself and the story behind this venture

1. How would you describe your role within the organization? (your position and responsibilities)
   a. How long have you worked in the organization?
   b. Have you ever worked in the public sector organisations before?
2. What are the core activities undertaken by your social venture (goods/services)?
3. What is the primary mission of your organization?
4. How did the organization come about? Could you please tell me about the social venture?
   - When was the organization established? By whom?
   - What is the target audience your goods or services are targeted to?
   - How many people are employed in the organization/how many are volunteers if any?
   - What legal form does your organization have? Does the choice of a legal form influence the objectives of your organization? If yes, in what way?
   - How is your organization funded?
   - What makes your organization different from traditional entrepreneurial ventures? (focus on the 'social' side)

Part 2. Questions about ongoing collaboration with a specific municipality. Initiation stage.

I would like you to think about some kind of *ongoing* collaboration your venture has with a municipality, in particular, that is considered to be important for your venture to achieve its core mission, goals and mobilize resources.

5. Tell me please the story behind this collaboration.

a. How did it come about?
b. Who initiated this collaboration?
c. How long has it been in operation?
d. What was the motivation to engage in this collaboration process?
e. In your view, what benefits does your social venture contribute and gain from this collaboration?
f. What, in your opinion, your partner gains from the collaboration?
g. In your opinion, how easy it was for your partner to understand your venture's mission and activities? Have you experienced any misunderstandings regarding your company profile and mission? If yes, could you name them?
h. In your opinion, to what extent was your venture flexible about establishing collaboration with a municipality?
i. Do you think that your partner played a dominating role in decision-making process of collaboration initiation? If yes, in what way?

6. What is the nature of the agreement you have with this organization?
   a. Is the agreement you have with this partner formal or informal?
   b. Why is it structured this way?
   c. What is the collaboration timeframe if any?
7. What are the objectives of this collaboration?
   a. Shared, individual?
   b. Was the purpose documented in any way?
   c. Did you have to negotiate the goal?

Part 3. Questions regarding the factors influencing the collaboration process

8. In general, in your opinion, could you think about the factors affecting the collaboration process?

a. What kind of external factors that prevent collaboration and its success? (bureaucracy, procurement rules, etc.)
b. Do you participate in procurement? If answer no/ yes: Which challenges have you encountered?

9. Do you trust your partner? How has trust developed within the relationship? Can you elaborate on what you did to build trust over time (activities)?
10. From your perspective of the social venture, has there ever been a sense of uncertainty within the relationship?
    a. If so, what were you uncertain about? Why?

Part 4. Questions regarding managing collaboration and navigating the arising challenges

11. Could you please describe your regular activities undertaken for maintaining collaboration? (phone calls, meeting agendas, casual events etc.)
12. Who makes main decisions in this collaboration?
13. Tell me please in detail about the communication process between your venture and your partner in terms of its tools, frequency and procedures?
    a. Who is responsible in your organization for maintaining and managing collaboration?
    b. How often do you communicate?

    Formal or informal communication? Communication channels?
    c. How often do you have meetings? What do you do during the meetings and how do you prepare for them?
14. From your experience, what are the processual activities that you consider as vital to fulfil collaboration its objectives?
15. What are the challenges that you face when collaborating with your partner?
16. How do these challenges affect the collaboration process?
17. Which tensions have you experienced in the collaboration with your partner?

18. Could you please describe how you deal with those tensions and handle challenges arising in collaboration?
19. Who in your opinion, is the most active collaborator?
20. Is there anything else you would like to say that you have not had a chance to say?

Appendix B. Interview guide – municipalities

Part 1. General questions

Tell me please about yourself.

1. How would you describe your role within the organisation? (your position and responsibilities)
2. What is your opinion as a public sector official towards collaboration with social ventures?
3. What is the difference in terms of securing contracts, procurement rules, etc. when it comes to collaboration with social ventures compared to the private actors (for-profits) and nonprofit organisations?
4. How much experience your organization has in terms of collaboration with social ventures?
5. How many partners among social ventures do you have?

Part 2. Question regarding specific case (collaboration with a specific social venture)

6. I know that you have established collaboration with _____ (social venture). I would like to ask you some questions about this.

Tell me please the story behind this collaboration in detail.

a. How did you meet your partner?
b. Who initiated the collaboration?
c. What form does this collaboration take? (formal, informal), What was the reason for that?
d. What was the motivation to engage in this collaboration?
e. How regularly do you have meetings? Who participates in those meetings from your organisation?
f. Who is responsible for maintaining collaboration?

7. In your opinion, services or goods provided by the social venture vis-à-vis public services are of a better quality, are *innovative*, have a greater impact, are cost-efficient? Could you explain in what way?
8. In your opinion, are social ventures more flexible than the public sector when it comes to delivering social services?
9. Do you consider those services as supplementary to those the public sector provides?
10. In your opinion, values of your organization are compatible those of your partner? In what way?
11. In your opinion, what was the motivation of your partner venture to engage into collaboration?
12. In your opinion, is your partner aware of local needs well and to what extent? Could you give examples?
13. In your opinion, can you let me know about the benefits your organsation gains from this collaboration?

Part 3. Questions regarding challenges for collaboration

14. To what extent do you find it challenging to collaborate with social ventures within existing frameworks (legal, procurement, etc.)?
    a. What are the challenges and tensions that you face when developing and maintaining collaboration with the existing partner?
    b. How do you do to handle those challenges?
    c. Has your organisation experienced uncertainty regarding dual mission of your partner, i.e. social and financial? If yes, how this uncertainty is resolved?
15. In your opinion, what factors hinder collaboration if there are such?
16. And finally, what is your experience with collaboration and your expectations to date?

Appendix C. Interview guide – social investor company

Part 1. General questions about organization and respondent

Tell me please about yourself and the story behind your organization

1. What are the core activities undertaken by organisation?
2. What is the primary mission of your organisation?
3. How did the organisation come about?
4. What is your work background?
5. When and why did you step into the area of Impact Investing?
6. Besides financial support, what other support do you provide to social entrepreneurs?

Part 2. Questions about a social venture Nature Magic funded through the SIB model

7. Tell me please the story behind the SIB and ongoing collaboration.

a. How did you get to know Nature Magic?
b. How the idea about the SIB model came about? Who was involved?
c. Who initiated this collaboration?
d. How long has it been in operation?
e. Could you please recall main events in this collaboration?
f. What was the motivation of your organization to engage in this collaboration process?
g. What, in your opinion, Rock municipality gains from the collaboration?
h. How important were the established relationships between Nature Magic and Rock municipality before you came?
i. In your opinion, do you think there was any kind of sceptisism towards your organisation as you are an investor company? If yes, could you please elaborate on that in more detail.

j. How much time did it take to arrange the set-up (how many meetings, how often, who did what)?

Part 3. Questions about a social investor company's role in the SIB

8. What is your stake in this? Are there any other returns other than social and/or economic?
9. What do you want to get out of this (SIB)? Do you have any plans to implement other SIBs in Norway?
10. Could you please describe your activities in implementing the SIB along the way? What exactly you did? What you were responsible for in this collaboration?
11. What is your expectations about it?

Appendix D. Observation guide for meetings

Social venture:	Participants :	When :
Municipality/ NAV:		
Social investor company		Where:

	Descriptive notes	Reflective notes
1. Purpose of meeting		
What is the agenda? Is it followed? Aims, objectives and potential outcomes are explicit? What kind? Did participants prepare for the meeting? In what ways?		
2. Activities in a meeting taking place		
Who is taking part in a meeting? How the meeting is organized: who does what and say what? Who is leading the meeting? Different roles What is the leader doing to encourage and facilitate discussion? Conflicts / Indifferences. How are they dealt with? Roles and responsibilities of participants are defined What kind of resources are needed? And how to get access to them? Do participants go beyond information sharing in its dialogue? Focus on overall goals? How are decisions made?		
3. Behavior of the participants		
Is there a constructive and collaborative dialogue?		

Who appears to be more motivated, engaged, or better prepared Who is talking most? Who is listening most? What is their body language? Are there signs of trust – (asking for smth, offering smth.)? Is there signs of dominance / power? Emotions and feeling of participants		
4. Materials used		
What (PPT, etc.) How		
5. Physical space(s)		
Where Infrastructure and organizing How it influences (facilitate/hamper) the interaction process		
6. Factors that affect collaboration		
Are any barriers hampering collaboration that are discussed? How these challenges can be dealt with? Any suggestions?		
7. Results		
Are decisions and agreements summarized at the end of the meeting? What is the result/ agreement of the meeting?		
8. Closing up		
How Feedback from participants		

Appendix E. NSD approval

NSD sin vurdering

Skriv ut

Prosjekttittel
Doing good by playing well with others: Insights into collaborative practices between social entrepreneurial ventures and the local public sector organizations in the Norwegian context

Referansenummer
892267

Registrert
24.08.2019 av Mikhail Kosmynin - mikhail.kosmynin@nord.no

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon
Nord Universitet / Fakultet for samfunnsvitenskap / Ledelse og innovasjon

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Type prosjekt
Forskerprosjekt

Prosjektperiode
01.09.2019 - 01.11.2021

Status
09.09.2019 - Vurdert

Vurdering (1)

09.09.2019 - Vurdert
Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg den 09.09.2019. Vi legger til grunn at de interne dokumentene det refereres til i prosjektet ikke er taushetsbelagte.

Behandlingen kan starte.

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER
Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til NSD ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Før du melder inn en endring, oppfordrer vi deg til å lese om hvilke type endringer det er nødvendig å melde:

https://nsd.no/personvernombud/meld_prosjekt/meld_endringer.html

Du må vente på svar fra NSD før endringen gjennomføres.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET
Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige kategorier av personopplysninger frem til 01.11.2021

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG
Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake. Lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen vil dermed være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER
NSD vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen om:

- lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen
- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke behandles til nye, uforenlige formål
- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER
Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: åpenhet (art. 12), informasjon (art. 13), innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18), underretning (art. 19), dataportabilitet (art. 20).

NSD vurderer at informasjonen om behandlingen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

Dersom det er tenkt å bruke en transkriberingsassistent må dette fremgå av informasjonsskrivet.

RETTIGHETER FOR TREDJEPERSONER
Før du filmer møter hvor tredjepersoner er tilsted må de få informasjon og du må få samtykke til eventuell filming.
Så lenge tredjepersoner kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter:: åpenhet (art. 12), informasjon (art. 13/14), innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18), underretning (art. 19), protest (art 21).

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER
NSD legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må dere følge interne retningslinjer og/eller rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET
NSD vil følge opp underveis (hvert annet år) og ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet/ pågår i tråd med den behandlingen som er dokumentert.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Gry Henriksen
Tlf. Personverntjenester: 55 58 21 17 (tast 1)

Collaboration plays a vital role in social venturing in terms of resourcing, social venture development and increased social impact. Hence, what do social entrepreneurs *do* when they enact collaboration?

Taking social venture-public collaboration as an empirical context, the thesis draws attention to the "doing" of social entrepreneuring by scrutinising the *processes* and *practices* through which social entrepreneurs enact public collaboration when resourcing social ventures and enabling public services to change. To address this, the study draws on two longitudinal case studies of social ventures in Norway and explores the processes and practices as they unfold and are experienced in real-time. The thesis consists of an extended cover essay ("kappe") and four independent research papers that address a number of issues related to entrepreneurial "doing" for collaboration in ambiguous environments.

The thesis challenges the individualised discourses of entrepreneurship by emphasising the importance of others in social entrepreneuring. As the resourcing and changing of public services is a collective endeavour, the findings underline the collective dimensions of social entrepreneuring. Approaching entrepreneurial "doing" from the practice ontology draws attention to the relational dynamics of entrepreneurial activities and practices, thereby stressing the importance of the mutual interpersonal relationships and surroundings within an entrepreneur's immediate practice. The thesis furthers our understanding of how social entrepreneurs weave new relations into collaboration by engaging in the specific practices and processes. It also extends our understanding of alternative investing by theorising it as brokering. In particular, the thesis points to the important role of social investors in enacting public collaboration, and thereby facilitating social venturing. Lastly, the thesis theorises on the powerful role of emotions as part of the entrepreneurial resourcing repertoire.

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